

तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय

SANTINIKETAN  
VISWA BHARATI  
LIBRARY

285

P 68

2. Cop.

PRESENTED  
BY THE TRUSTEES OF THE PARNET PUNCHAYET  
FUNDS & PROPERTIES FROM THE SIR JAMSETJEE  
JEJEEBHOY TRANSLATION FUND.



PRESENTED  
BY THE TRUSTEES OF THE PARSEE PUNGHAYET  
FUNDS & PROPERTIES FROM THE SIR JAMSETJEE  
JEJEEBHoy TRANSLATION FUND.



PRESENTED  
BY THE TRUSTEES OF THE PARSE BUNDHAYET  
FUNDS & PROPERTIES FROM THE SIR JAMES LEE  
JEEBHAY TRANSLATION FUND

*ent*

# STEPS TO PROPHET ZOROASTER

WITH

## A BOOK OF DAILY ZOROASTRIAN PRAYERS

BY

MANECKJI BEJANJI PITHAWALLA, B.A., B.Sc.

PRINCIPAL OF THE SIRDAR DASTUR HOSHANG HIGH SCHOOL, POONA.



[ WITH ILLUSTRATIONS ]



9970

1916

Price Rs. 2

"The question of religion, bound up as it is with the Whence and the Whither, the Alpha and the Omega of life, stirs the deepest depths of human nature; it is the factor in education beside which the teacher of languages, mathematics and science sinks into insignificance."

—C. H. P. MAYO,  
*in "The Nineteenth Century and After."*

"If we could lead the pupils aright in attractive ways and carry religion into the very heart of Parsee family life, then only could we remove scepticism, and creating a high moral purpose make a marked improvement in the character and welfare of the rising generation."

—"*Parsee Educational Service*"





DADABHAI NAOROJI ESQUIRE, LL.D.

A GREAT PARSEE

A SINCERE FOLLOWER OF THE PROPHET

AND

THE GRAND OLD MAN OF INDIA

WHOSE LIFE OF ACTIVE SERVICE TO HIS MOTHER-COUNTRY

IS A FITTING MODEL

TO THE RISING PARSEE GENERATION.



## Foreword

**T**HERE is no denying the fact that religion, "the Alpha and the Omega of life," is the brightest and most necessary light needed in all our affairs and that food for the Soul must be properly supplied with worldly education. Religion is really a most powerful factor in the education of young people, and our significant contact with western thoughts and civilisation has also taught us to rely upon our past folklore and traditions and our old sublime Faith. In order to keep pace with the material growth in the world, our reverence for God must be abiding and our faith in the Spiritual Leader unflinching. This is especially so in the students' world.

I have keenly felt for a long time the need of a handy book on the Zoroastrian religion in simple English, together with a book of daily prayers in the original Avesta with commentary for the use of young boys and girls studying in higher institutions. With this object in view I had published in 1912 a "Zoroastrian Daily Prayer Book," and the present volume is written on similar lines.

Time has made the Parsees forget altogether the old languages of their scriptures, while utilitarians deride the critical study of the dead Avestan and Pahlavi methods of expression. But we need not therefore lose also their inner spirit and fragrance. An attempt has been made in this book to translate some of the most striking features of the Zend-Avesta and to put them in an attractive form for all who desire to peep into the glorious past. This is, I believe, a step towards the Right Path, a step towards our revered Prophet Zoroaster and towards all that has been connected with Him.



Ten small books on different subjects are put together in this volume. In the first book the reader is initiated into the Zend-Avesta, and the essential features of Zoroastrianism are clearly shewn. The second is a prayer book for the use of Parsee students, in the form of songs in Avestá, Pázend, Fársi and English to be repeated daily before other lessons begin, in order that they may carry a good thought every morning to their class rooms. For holy days a longer common prayer has been given after the thirty daily songs. The Avestan treasure has been preserved in these selections; and at the same time, in order to convey the sense in current language, they have been translated into simple English as far as practicable. The original characters, which are unfortunately unknown to our people to-day, have been transliterated into English characters, just like the Gujaráti characters of our prayer book written in that language. No changes have been made in the original text, and references to the larger Avesta have been given at the end. Sometimes a verb in the first person singular has been changed into the first person plural, so as to recommend joint prayers if desirable. It should, however, be borne in mind that it is not my intention that these songs should supersede the prayers of the Khordeh Avesta; for, in the third book fuller notes have been given on the regular Parsee daily and divisional prayers, and ceremonies have not been disregarded. In the fourth, a short sketch of the religious career of the Prophet has been given and His personality depicted in order to place before the reader's eyes His great ideal. Outlines of sermons on Zoroastrian subjects have been put in the fifth part to give the student an opportunity to work them up in essay form. They form, however, some important principles and points to remember and a few historical facts which every Parsee ought to know. In the sixth book the reader is introduced to literature in general and to old Persian poetry in particular. Poetry always attracts the youthful mind, and the student will find in this chapter some wholesome religious food in antique verse. The

seventh book traverses a wider field, viz., science taken in the broadest sense possible, and an endeavour has been made herein to show that there are ideas in the time-honoured Parsee customs which resemble those of the present day. Educationists now insist that a course in Moral Education should form part of the school programme. The old method of giving religious and moral instruction in stereotyped essays and old-fashioned sermons to be crammed should be done away with, and religion and morality should both be brought home to the pupils in their every-day life. Stories of any type are interesting and morals can be more easily taught through these than through bare quotations and extracts from moral treatises. A selection of a few such tales has been made in the eighth part. The ninth is a book of great thoughts from and about the Zend-Avesta. To enhance the student's devotion the daily reading of one quotation is recommended. The tenth book is a very feeble attempt at a versified lecture on Zoroastrianism, in the absence of any such literature.

Thus it will be seen that the whole volume is meant to serve the double purpose of educating the rising generation in this important subject, and of supplying a great variety of allied matters for general reading in English. This book is not intended to be used only in Parsee high schools but also to serve as a useful manual for home-training.

I have not ventured herein to claim any originality, or to impose upon the reader any dogma or patent theories. My chief object, as a teacher of Avesta, has been to present in a suitable manner the kernel of the Parsee scriptures. No pains have been spared to make the book attractive, useful and acceptable to young Parsee students and other seekers after religious lore. The indulgence of the reader is craved towards any errors in it.

A few illustrations bearing on Zoroastrian aspects have been put in here and there. I am grateful to Mr. M. S. Dhotré, who kindly prepared the drawings for some of the blocks.

I am indebted to all the scholars named in the book itself and my thanks are especially due to Professor L. H. Mills for the quotations from his "Hymns of Zoroaster," published by Messrs. K. & J. Cooper.

In conclusion, it is my earnest prayer that many readers of these pages may be stimulated to the effort of studying for themselves at least a part of the original Avesta.

M. P.

POONA :

Jamshedi Naoroz, 1285 A. Y.

# Contents of 10 Books

---

	PAGES
<b>BOOK 1.—Initiation into the Zend-Avesta</b>	
A Retrospect ... ..	3
A Period of Transition ... ..	5
The Discovery of the Iránian Treasure...	6
To the General Reader ... ..	7
To the Student World ... ..	8
Reserved Benefits for such Students ... ..	10
A Plea for Classical Education ... ..	10
Lessons from non-Zoroastrians ... ..	12
Essential Features of the Faith ... ..	13
Beauties of Zoroastrianism ... ..	14
Concluding Remarks ... ..	15
 <b>BOOK 2.—Zoroastrian Songs for Daily Prayers</b>	
1. The Fundamentals ... ..	19
2. The All-ruling Ahura Mazda ... ..	20
3. The Eternal Law ... ..	21
4. The Great Creed ... ..	22
5. Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds ... ..	23
6. Salvation .. ...	24
7. The Path to the Lord : I ... ..	25
8. The Path to the Lord : II ... ..	26
9. The Spiritual Leader ... ..	27
10. Those who Fought for Righteousness ... ..	28
11. The Gifts from Ahura Mazda ... ..	29
12. We Praise These ... ..	30
13. Zoroastrian Blessings... ..	31
14. A Soliloquy ... ..	32
15. "Work is Worship" ... ..	33
16. May the Demon be Destroyed ... ..	34

	PAGES
17. Ideal Man and Woman ... ..	35
18. Morning Prayer ... ..	36
19. Night Prayer ... ..	37
20. Confirmation ... ..	38
21. The Angel of Victory ... ..	39
22. The Great Dead ... ..	40
23. In Praise of the Prophet ... ..	41
24. In Praise of Ormuzd ... ..	42
25. Hail! Spitama Zarathushtra ... ..	44
26. The Great Zoroaster ... ..	46
27. We Hear the Voice of Zarthost say ... ..	47
28. Hail! Gracious Ormuzd ... ..	48
29. The Bountiful Guardians ... ..	49
30. "God Save the King!" ... ..	50
A Common Prayer ... ..	51
References ... ..	62

### BOOK 3.—Hints on Regular Parsee Prayers

Prayer in General ... ..	67
Formality in Prayer ... ..	69
How, What and When to Pray ... ..	71
Common Prayers ... ..	73
Ceremonial Prayers ... ..	74
Naojot Ceremony ... ..	79
Návar Ceremony ... ..	79
Marátab Ceremony ... ..	80
Marriage Ceremony ... ..	81
Dokhma Ceremony ... ..	82
Installation of Âtash Beherám ... ..	84
The Parsee Calendar ... ..	90

### BOOK 4.—A Picture of Zarathushtra from the Gáthás

A Powerful Personality ... ..	93
The Call of Zoroaster ... ..	94

	PAGES
Historical Personage. His Initiation. Entering upon the Office ... ..	95
The Great Crusade ... ..	96
Victory. A Conference. His First Disciples ...	97
His Soliloquy and Study of Nature ... ..	98
His only Sermon ... ..	99
A Religious Reformer. His Watchword ...	100
Good Thoughts, Words and Deeds. This Great Moral Teacher. A Practical Reformer ... ..	101
The Doctrine of Dualism. This Spiritual Leader ...	102
Great Mission in our World ... ..	103
His Message ... ..	104
Lessons to Learn ... ..	105

#### **BOOK 5.—Outlines of Sermons on Zoroastrianism**

Beauties of Zoroastrianism... ..	109
Development of Zoroastrianism: Its Influence in the World ... ..	110
Humata-Hukhta-Hvarshta... ..	113
Death and Disposal of the Dead ... ..	114
Life after Death—the Soul ... ..	116
Sudreh and Kushti ... ..	117
The Sacred Books of the Parsees ... ..	118
Ups and Downs in the Story of Persia ... ..	123
The Parsees in India: Their Mission ... ..	130
Persia to-day: Geography ... ..	132

#### **BOOK 6.—A Review of Ancient Persian Poetry**

The Choice of Literature ... ..	139
The Scope of Ancient Persian Literature ...	139
Ruins of a Mighty Literature ... ..	140
Literary History ... ..	141
Verse precedes Prose ... ..	141

	PAGES
The Prosaic Period ... ..	143
The Revival of Letters ... ..	144
A Parsee Epic ... ..	145
Avesta Prosody in General... ..	146
Poetry of the Five Gáthás ... ..	148
The Truth about the Gáthás ... ..	151
Their Merits ... ..	152
Zoroaster as a Poet ... ..	152
The Yasna Haptangháiti ... ..	152
A Poetic Contrast ... ..	153
The Poetic portion of the Vendidad ... ..	154
The Poets of the Yashts ... ..	154

## BOOK 7—Science in Ancient Irán

The Mission of Science ... ..	159
Science in Irán .. ...	160
The Energy of Fire ... ..	161
The Manthraic Theory ... ..	162
Theory of Light ... ..	163
Avesta Gáhs and Iránian Latitudes ... ..	164
Heavenly Bodies ... ..	164
Equinoxes ... ..	165
Seasons and Nature Study ... ..	165
Agriculture and Irrigation... ..	166
Vegetable Kingdom ... ..	168
Animal Kingdom ... ..	168
Commercial and Industrial Pursuits ... ..	172
Hygiene and Health ... ..	174
Medicine and Surgery ... ..	177
Science of the Tower of Silence ... ..	179
Architecture ... ..	179
Dualism and Evolution ... ..	181
Science of Zend Philology ... ..	183

	PAGES
Miscellaneous ... ..	184
Science of Education ... ..	186
<b>BOOK 8.—Moral Tales from Persian Classics</b>	
A Place for Moral Education ... ..	191
Sources of Information ... ..	191
<b>BOOK 9.—Great Thoughts</b> ... ..	219
<b>BOOK 10.—Fragments of Religious Verses</b>	
Our Prayer to-day ... ..	231
Sweet Irán ... ..	232
'Tis this we Parsees need to-night ... ..	233
Light Divine ... ..	234
The Parsee Pilgrim Fathers at Sanján ... ..	235



# Errata

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	<i>Incorrect</i>	<i>Correct</i>
96	15	his	His
96	24	Against	against
126	12	Grenaiccus	Granichus
135	8	Kafars	"Kafars"
159	4	show	shows
165	30	Fasti	Fasali
168	11	Dr. Hang	Haug
168	14	perfomance	performance
170	27-8	of which use is made	which is made use of
183	5	was	was given to
187	4	at home training	home-training
188	11	and, above all	and
195	13	self-centreed	self-centred
195	23	marking	making
202	21	but	and
204	6	dominious	dominions
205	19	return	to return
210	21	mony	money
210	31	greatly puzzled	being greatly puzzled
213	23	, -	of
213	24	most	the most
214	25	creations	creation's
215	4	resounding	resounded and
224	7	graduates	graduate
226	5	born out	born
228	6	emcumbering	encumbering

BOOK 1

INITIATION INTO  
THE ZEND-AVESTA



# Initiation into the Zend-Avesta

---

## A Retrospect

**T**URN over slowly the precious pages of the history of the world and you will come across a page therein written with golden characters, bearing the name "the Parsee Community." It is this body of people that had once domineered over the seven Keshwars of the world and had secured for the ruling chief the hereditary title of the "Great King" for many a century; it is this community which had undergone many a hard trial ages before the paramount Iranian power fell from its eminent height and was plunged in the depths of defeat and danger; it is they that also went through various vicissitudes, while hiding themselves in caves and mountains of foreign lands for long and burning the sacred fire in subterranean caverns, far away from the influence of bigoted Moslems, who once for all held sway over the land of Airyanevæjo and made Khalif Omar the hero of the day; and it is this same religious body that has preserved in a pure form the tenets of the great religion, which the noble prophet of Iran preached to the world many years ago, and which is at present bequeathed to a handful of adherents struggling for prominence on the western shores of this auspicious land Aryavarta.

Centuries have passed and years have rolled on, the old order has changed and a new one has taken its place, yet the sayings and teachings of the Great Master, who flourished in times immemorial, have yet preserved their sweet fragrance in the Zend-Avesta. Nations have come and nations have gone, yet the religion of Zoroaster is still there in its pure form

for those "who value the records of the human race." Such is the sweet melody of the Prophet's songs preserved by the remnant of the once imperial race. Such is the monument built in memory of the glorious preceptor, and such is the splendour of the light that shone powerfully in remote antiquity. The sacred lore of Zoroaster bears still an infinite value, inasmuch as it gives us an idea of the vast ideals that underlie his rare career. His is a "stirring soul," inspiring all those who sit at his feet with the noblest notions regarding the creations of Ahura Mazda.

But very few are now left in our world to-day to sing of the great Singer who flourished so long before our own age. The fatal fields of Nahavand and Cadesia dealt a death-blow to the mighty Persian Empire and the crown of the Great King was once for all snatched away from this ill-fated race. A new era of Mahomedanism was established there at the cost of national independence and after the sacrifice of hundreds of thousands of innocent souls! Islam (the religion of submission) uprooted the old faith of Iran, obliterated its ancient glories, burnt every vestige of its precious literature and then gave tranquillity and peace to the unhappy country! The great poet Thomas Moore appropriately sings:—

"Just Alla! what must be Thy look,  
When such a wretch before Thee stands  
Unblushing with Thy sacred book,—  
Turning the leaves with blood-stain'd hands,  
And wresting from its page sublime  
His creed of lust, and hate, and crime!"

The sacred Book of the old Persians then met an evil fate and the sweetness of the sacred songs lost their charm as they lay unsung for centuries. It is no use evading the rude consequences of the Arab invasion of Persia—history is so lucid and exact on the point. The long-standing Iranian sovereignty

expired then, but the race and the faith did not. The Parsees of Western India, to save their dearer religion, left their dear land and settled in this new country to preserve the melody of their Prophet's hymns and the perfume upon their ever-burning fire. While a few followers still endeavour to continue their home in Persia amidst new but strange surroundings, here in India too there are now not many who spare moments enough to explore the fields of the Zend-Avesta and read themselves a page in the original from the life history of Zarathushtra.

With such a past behind, but with hopes of a good future before them, the Parsee race is now passing through **a period of transition** in this country at the time when the West is slowly pouring into the East and eddies and whirlpools in goodly numbers are created. A Protestant race is fast developing among the Zoroastrians of Western India, while their brethren in old Iran are still adhering to their ancient catholic ways. In spite of this if the community is renowned to-day for "probity, high morality, truthfulness and charity," it does seem as though the whole body of Zoroaster's teachings is indeed a "priceless treasure." The Zend-Avesta is rich with relics of the past and although it has passed through serious trials during its course round the wheel of fortune, in it are still preserved many nuggets of spiritual gold. To such a treasure it is worth our while to draw the attention of the rising generation—the pillars of future Parseeism. We want the good old religion at the back of the race and modern civilisation in front of it, so that there may result a happy mingling of what is best in both. What is most needed is their faith in Mazdayasnian Zoroastrianism, and their pride in the history of ancient Persia. Above all, in this age of applied knowledges, we really need the *application* of Zoroastrianism in an *attractive* form.

We may pray that our youngsters may now be taught what their Prophet said and did in those bygone days, so that they

they one day rise, and rising raise along with themselves others on to a higher and higher platform of purity, nobility and duty. "Hail, Zarathustra, the son of Spitama is born unto us" are the echoing words of the author of the Farvardin Yasht, and what more does a young Zoroastrian require than that amount of divine philosophy of beautiful and wonderful words of life that are stored up for him in the Parsee Scriptures, the Zend-Avesta !

### The Discovery of the Iranian Treasure

About the middle of the eighteenth century, a young French boy of twenty accidentally came across a few pages of some old manuscript from the Bodleian Library, written in a peculiar language, which suddenly caught his fancy, and he resolved, come what may, to further inquire as to what that dialect was and to what country or nationality the scriptures belonged. Not knowing how he could gather any material results in his own land, he decided to go to the country where he could get them and so enlisted himself as an ordinary soldier in the French East India Company then trading with the East Indies. It was in August 1755. Times were hard then, and difficulties were almost insurmountable, as those were days of great competition and also war between England and France. And yet in his own glowing account of his splendid voyage and sojourn in the East, we have from Anquetil du Perron an interesting but very surprising story as to how he himself reached Pondicherry on March 15, 1762; how he struggled and worked and learned and then after some years returned home full of pride and hopes that he had discovered the sacred books of the Parsees, whose ancestors were the Aryans of ancient Persia. But the stars did not shine at once bright for the Avesta: for Anquetil was so vain and haughty, instead of modestly allowing his works to speak for themselves he put on such a triumphant air as if he had discovered so many







new worlds. Anquetil published in 1771 his monumental work—the translation of the entire Avesta—in three volumes with a sumptuous title covering some six lines, including in it a funny account of his own personal appearance, his troublesome voyage, and long stay in India and study of the Zend-Avesta under Dastur Dáráb of Surat. His blunder lay also in his speaking very slightly of the University of Oxford and thereby arousing the anger of Sir William Jones, then a student, who in return went to the other extreme and denied even the very existence of a lore like that of the Avesta.

But in Germany Anquetil's work fared better and Pleucker there "vindicated Anquetil from the charge of having attempted to impose a fabricated language upon the learned of Europe." Later we have the labours of E. Burnouf, the father of Zend Philology, which tempted the scholars of Europe to pay their serious attention to the study of the Parsee scriptures; then we have had quite a host of SAVANTS to throw considerable light on the sacred lore, Spiegel and Haug, Darmesterer and Westergaard, Maxmuller and Jackson and Lawrence Mills.

### To the General Reader

'Reveal to me, O Ahura! the straight paths of profit, that I may do good to the whole world without, that the good that I can do to it would reflect and rebound itself to me within, O Mazda!'—would be the daily and heartfelt prayer of a young Zoroastrian, if for a while he would look to this rare treasure from Iran. To initiate himself into this pure and holy realm of Zoroaster, he should lay aside the discomposed attitude of his mind and listen to the wise words of this great Religious Instructor who flourished long ago in the noble home of the whole Aryan race. While, with patience and perseverance—for

they should be the very pillars of the sacred knowledge to be acquired—we study the little volume of the Zend-Avesta, we are surprised to find the deep philosophy, that lies at the root of the high ideals, garbed in the beautiful language of Iranian antiquity.

“Every person who has religious principles, not to say every Parsi, should read the Hymns of Zoroaster, for they contain the essence of Universal Religion, in one of the *purest* as well as the *earliest* forms in which it has appeared,”—these are the words of a non-Zoroastrian, and should we again and again remind our co-religionists that there is all truth in each and every word of this statement? If goodness be “its own reward,” taught so nicely in the Zend-Avesta—“Ill to the evil, pure blessings to the good”—

“Then these doctrines ye do learn  
Which Ahura gave, O ye mortals,  
For our welfare and in grace  
When long is the wound of the wicked  
And blessings the lot of the pure ;  
*Upon this shall there be Salvation.*”—YASNA 30,

Suffice it to say that there lie, buried underneath the vast field of the Avesta, hidden mysteries, which we as well as our immediate forefathers have not dreamt of. Let us, then, awake the nimble spirit of our soul and find out for ourselves the many valuable and beauteous ideals that are yearning to be known by us.

### To the Student World

While, then, this might be repeated to the general reader, a special request is to be made to the student world at large. Whereas a student in one of the Western Universities is so eager

in the pursuit of substantial knowledge, one at our Universities is so anxious for getting through the bonds of examinations, that one has, in the end, a very faint idea of what knowledge means. Nor does the second language escape this general apathy. Many Zarthoshti students, who study at present for our University degrees, select as their Second Language one of the "current" languages, and disregard any of the "dead" ones altogether. Thus the special advantages of "living in antiquity" are quite unknown to them. "In this age of commerce and industry, Avesta or Persian could not be as *useful* as any other current language." None can help making such remarks, they are so patent to many. Yet, were there any thoughtful mind, it would instantly see how they labour under a fruitless aim of getting on in this world. Here are but feeble arguments which to be answered require but to be known. Here lies man's most marked mistake of blindly doing what others are found doing. And herein is man's imperfection set forth in full and fiery light, to work against the designs of the Deity of Perfection. Man, a frail creature of this ephemeral world, would not easily conceive what boundless power is there, which binds the whole of our solar system, with ourselves and our neighbouring planets, and each individual distant sun together with his own planetary system, comprising the whole globe of the numberless heavenly bodies bound and tied fast as one whole compact mass, and carries them away in the direction of the constellation Hercules! So, as says Lord Tennyson, "From the Great Deep to the Great Deep we go," and yet we shall hope, hope for the best, and repeat, as says Holy Zoroaster, "Benefit is the end of nature."

This much for blind imitation. Yet, alas! how many young Parsee boys and girls, in our time, even after having gone through the most difficult curricula of studies for so many examinations in various branches, have no idea of even the A.B.C. of their religious writings. But, on the contrary, having too many

/

formulæ and theories in their heads they even dare to say "Humbug" and "Nonsense," when they are told something peculiar to them in the *old* matters of their Faith! Such is the strange state of affairs among the limited Parsee community.

### **Reserved benefits for such Students**

To learn Avesta and to study the Sacred Scriptures even through translation in a school or a higher institution, are actions not without some special charms. To keep among one's text books a volume of the Sacred Avesta is a reserved boon for one. But it is not enough if the volume be kept in the drawer and never opened. Real study leaves many a rich effect invariably behind. Early in the morning, an hour might be most profitably spent in studying the compulsory, yet interesting, lessons from the languages of the scriptures, before beginning other subjects for the daily course. A well-digested Gâthic verse in the early morn beautifies the full course of the day. It is a sort of genuine prayer, when now the verses are repeated with clear understanding.

### **A Plea for Classical Education**

We have then to solve the vexed question of classical culture. None of our senators can deny its value in liberal education. Without it there is a great loss to us and there is thereby created "an extremely artificial condition" of things. Man feels proud that he has made a conquest of nature; he is now enduring its exhilarating influence. In this onward march of progress in all directions, the Parsees too have given their share. But then there is another fallacy to correct. The destruction of everything old is regarded as a chief criterion of civilisation. So it is with educational principles at present in India. In the

hurry and skurry of making our youngsters "talk like English boys" our parents have disregarded the old and the antique. Even some have to teach us how to "think and feel in English."

In our attempt to imitate the Westerners we have unconsciously set aside our national folklore. If the true aim and object of education is to make "capable and cultivated human beings," the national character can only be built upon our classical language and literature. Little scope is given at present for national culture in our present-day Parsee education. But it must not be forgotten that the present Parsee generation owes a deep debt of gratitude to the past and that is to be repaid by our leaving a precious heritage for the coming generation. References should therefore constantly be made to our past records and past folklore preserved by our classical languages, *for no education can be complete without referring to the past.* But the Parsees have so far cared to know little thereof save by hearsay. In the words of A. H. Bleek: "The Parsees seem to have taken but little interest in their own legends, their own language. It was not a Parsee, but the Mohammedan Firdusi, who collected the stories of old Persian heroes and kings and embodied them in an immortal poem; and now, again, it is not Parsees but European scholars who have restored to some degree of intelligibility the all-forgotten language of Zarathushtra." It is just on account of this reason that there is little fresh addition made to the Parsee literature in the last century. There are few Parsee thinkers and writers in our midst, and there is little originality left in the community as a whole. Again, Parsees have no proper vernacular of their own; in schools our children learn Gujarati more as a second language than as their vernacular. This is just the result of our negligence and distaste for the ancient classics.

A general knowledge of our national literature in Avesta, Pahlavi and Persian creates a dignity of mind and a dignity of expression. The concise compositions of our forefathers develop

to a great extent the powers of thinking and of observation. A verse from the condensed hymns or a passage from the Pahlavi mnemonics gives wholesome food for penetration and exposition. In these smallest of compasses there are so many marvels of human expressions of thought. The culture which results from the study of these ancient methods of expression must elevate the *national stamina* of the Parsees. The national heroic literature is always the real basis of moulding character. At the very beginning of the school course we now need some patriotic songs from the sacred books with full understanding in a current language, in order that many a young eye may open to receive more and more illumination, and many a young heart may beat with fresher resolution day after day.

A practical solution of the problem of "the classical" has been suggested by the idea of founding a Central College or Academy or Asram for the Parsees, there to saturate the surrounding atmosphere with pure Zoroastrian ideals; but by the time that institution is started, it would be well to learn the languages and sacred scriptures in purely Zoroastrian Schools and in old College-like Madressas. We wish thereby to organise the community internally at first.

### **Lessons from non-Zoroastrians**

Let us, now, ask what is in the Avestaic Faith, that has attracted the minds of many an able Western scholar to explore and expand this sacred lore. It shows that there is something in this, when day by day something new is revealed to us, who are fortunate enough to share the fruits reaped by these non-Zoroastrians. As Bleeck puts it: "A religion which for ages prior to Christianity announced that men must be pure in thought as well as in word and deed, and that sins must be repented of before they could be atoned for,—a religion whose followers were forbidden to kill even animals wantonly, at a

time when the ancestors of the French and English nations were accustomed to sacrifice human victims to their sanguinary Deities, *such a pure and venerable religion is one which must always command the respect of the civilised world, and of which a Parsee may well be proud.*" One has also but to think for a moment and one will be happily reminded of the day, when Professor Jackson of America secured an unusual experience "of standing amidst rare circumstances" in a fire-temple in Zoroaster's own land, and "of listening to the priests of his hereditary line," sending one full chorus, to Ahura Mazda, of verses from the Sacred Scriptures, as had been done for thousands of years. Only, again, a thought is required and to the memory would recur the day, when a man like Dr. Haug should recite the Yazishn Ceremony formulæ, amidst the tolling and ringing of Lâlâs and Hâvanas, and the very atmosphere should be filled with something divine and holy. "The more I study," says Professor James Moulton, "the religion of the Parsees, the more I am impressed with the greatness of the Founder of their Faith." Such is also the opinion of Samuel Laing: "It is evident that this simple and sublime religion is one to which, by whatever name we call it, the best modern thought is fast approximating. Men of science like Huxley, philosophers like Herbert Spencer and poets like Tennyson might all subscribe to it." But for such unselfish workers in the field of the Avesta lore, there is little doubt that the Parsee community would have been in some poor condition to-day.

### **Essential Features of the Faith**

That the Avestaic religion is full of rationality and practicability, one would easily find for oneself, if only one take even an occasional peep into this boundless field of social, moral and intellectual store of wisdom and Manthras. Whoever wishes to find out rationality, let him turn to the arguments in the



Pahlavi annotations of the Avesta. To those who demand fuller and sublimer expressions of thought, we present the poetic portions in the varied Iranian literature. Whoever desires to know what purity is, to him we offer the very law-code of the Vendidad. And whosoever longs for inspiration and revelation, to him we dedicate the pure Gâthâs, the Hymns composed by the Holy Prophet himself. "Do if you can," is the essence of all precepts of Zoroaster, there is *no blind belief* enjoined by his religion.

In more appealing words, which ought to be written in letters of gold in every class-room of a purely Zoroastrian School, Professor L. H. Mills of Oxford has clearly defined what are the

### Beauties of Zoroastrianism:—

"If the mental illumination and spiritual elevation of many millions of mankind, throughout long periods of time, are of any importance, it would require strong proofs to deny that Zarathustrianism has had an influence of very positive power in determining the gravest results. That man should be taught to look within rather than without, to believe that suffering and sin do not originate from the capricious power of a Deity still called 'good,' that the 'good thought, word, and deed' should be recognised as essential to all sanctity, even in the presence of a superstitious ceremonial, that judgment should be expected according to deeds done in the body, and the soul consigned to a Heaven of virtue or to a Hell of vice, its recompense being pronounced by the happy or stricken conscience—these can never be regarded by serious historians as matters of little moment, and if, on the contrary, they are allowed to be matters of great moment, *the Zend-Avesta should be revered and studied by all who value the records of the human race.*"

**Concluding Remarks**

It is, then, the greatest of all our privileges to be **initiated** into this precious field of the Avesta, to grasp the secrets of these holy Manthras, to follow the thoughts of the great Prophet, to know the best things that have been said or done by him. And it is the greatest of all boons to train our mind to follow the sacred lore, train to see and think and know, to understand the Scriptures of our Faith in the best way we can, and, then, to promulgate and hand down this oldest and purest religion of ours, for thousands of years more.

So we sing along with the Poet Laureate :—

“ Let knowledge grow from more to more  
But more of reverence in us dwell.”

Let us, now, be up and with humility begin ; let us, then, but work and *with reverence* continue ; and with hope and courage sail onwards in this our lofty quest.



BOOK 2

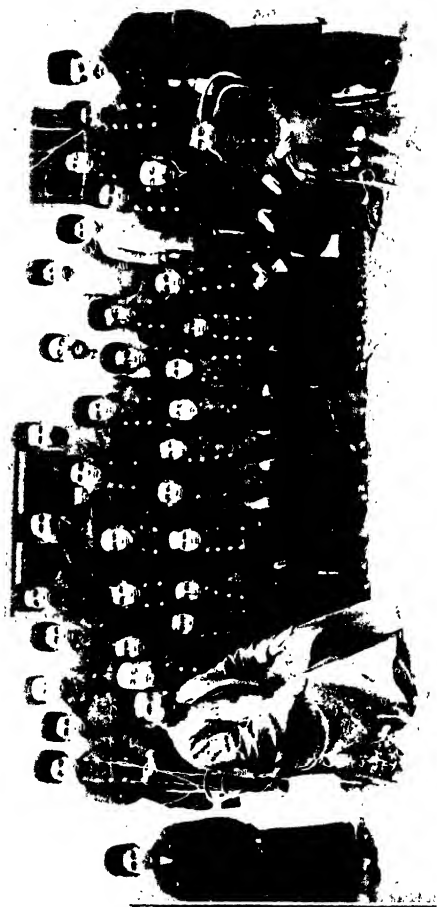
ZOROASTRIAN SONGS  
FOR DAILY PRAYERS

## NOTE

In deciphering the transliteration of the Avesta, Pázend and Farsi songs, the reader will find the following vowel sounds adopted for this volume:—

- a (short) as in woman.
- á or ā (long) as in bar.
- ã (nasal) as ā with a *nasal* sound.
- e (short) as in bed or mate.
- é or ē (long) as in prey.
- i (short) as in in.
- í or ī (long) as in intrigue.
- o (short) as in home or course.
- ó or ō (long) as in goal.
- u (short) as in full.
- ú or ū (long) as in good.





# 30 ZOROASTRIAN SONGS

FOR

## DAILY PRAYERS

### SONG 1

#### The Fundamentals

**Avesta :**

Kshnaothra Ahurahe Mazdāō !  
Setāyashne Dādār Ahura Mazda,  
Tavānā O Dānā O Dādār !  
Ashem vōhū, vahishtem asti,  
Ushtā asti ; ushtā ahmāi  
Hyat ashāi vahishtāi ashem.  
Bagām ashahe vahishtahe yazamaide.  
Fra-sraothremcha, fra-marethremcha.  
Asha vahishta, asha sraeshta daresāma-Thwā,  
Pai-ri-Thwā jamyāma, hamem-Thwā bakhma.

**English :**

May Ahura Mazda be rejoiced !  
Praise to Thee, O omnipotent, omniscient,  
O Creator Ahuramazda !  
Righteousness is good ; Righteousness is best.  
It is happiness ; happiness to him, namely, to the purest  
in purity.  
We admire the prayer of Asha Vahishta (Ashem Vohu)  
in order to recite it and in order to remember it.  
With the best righteousness and the highest, O Mazda !  
We behold Thee, we approach Thee and Thy kinship for  
ever.



## SONG 2

### The all-ruling Ahura Mazda

#### Avesta :

**Vasascha Tū Ahura Mazda**  
**Ushtācha kshaesha havanām dāmanām !**  
**Vasō āpō, vasō urvarāō,**  
**Vasō vispa vōhū asha chithra !**  
**Kshayamnem ashavanem dāyata,**  
**Akshayamnem dravantem !**  
**Hu-kshathrōtemāi bā-at kshathrem !**  
**Ahmat hyat aibi-dademahichā,**  
**Chishmahichā, hvāumahichā, hyat**  
**Mazdāi Ahurāi ashāichā vahishtāi.**

#### English :

**O Ahura Mazda ! Mayest Thou rule over Thy creations**  
**according to Thy will and with happiness !**  
**Mayest Thou rule, as Thou wilt, over waters, trees and**  
**over all good originated from purity !**  
**May the Righteous be appointed as ruling, and the evil as**  
**not ruling !**  
**May the kingdom be verily of the Good Ruler !**  
**For, we dedicate it to Ahura Mazda and to Righteousness**  
**the Best ; we, again, ascribe it to Him and make it**  
**His own.**

## SONG 3

## The Eternal Law

## Avesta :

Spentem at Thwā Mazdā menghī Ahurā,  
 Hyat Thwā angheush zāthōi daresem paourvīm,  
 Hyat dāō shyaothnā mizdvāu yāchā ukhdhā,  
*Akem akāi vanguhīm ashīm vanghave,*  
 Thwā hunarā dāmōish urvaese apemē.  
 Yahmi spentā Thwā mainyu urvaese jasō  
 Mazdāi kshathrā ahmi vōhū mananghā,  
 Yehyā shyaothnāish gaethāō ashā frādente ;  
 Aeibyō ratūsh senghaiti ārmaitish  
 Thwahyā khrateush yem naechish dābayeiti.

## English :

"So in creation's birth when first *I* saw Thee  
 Bounteous in vision later things portend,  
 When deeds, most just, rewarding and words Thou givest  
*Ill to the evil, pure blessings to the Good,*  
 By Thy just wisdom in the world's last end.  
 In which last changing, Thou a spirit bounteous  
 Comest with Thy pure realm, which wrong retrieves,  
 By deeds of whom the settlements in Right are furthered,  
 Laws unto these to teach devotion striveth,  
 Laws of Thy wisdom which no man deceives."

## SONG 4

## The Great Creed

Avesta :

Yā varanāō āpō, yā varanāō urvarāō,  
 Yā varanā gāush hudhāō, yā varanō Ahurō  
 Mazdāō,  
 Yā varanō as Zarathushtrō, yā varanō Kavā  
 Vishtāspō,  
 Yā varanō kaschit saoshyantām  
 Haithyā-varezām ashaonām,

*Tā varenāchā tkaeshāchā.*

Astuye daenām vanguhim Māzdayasnīm  
 Fra-spāyaokhedrām, nidhā-snaithishem  
 Khaetva-dathām ashaonīm,  
*Yā A'huirish Zarathushtrish.*

English :

*Of that form and creed* we declare ourselves to be, as are  
 the waters, the vegetations, the animals of good  
 creation and Ahura Mazda.

As were also Zoroaster the Prophet, Gustasp the King,  
 Frashostra and Jamaspa.

As was every one of the holy and righteous benefactors of  
 the World.

We praise the good Mazdayasnian Religion, the peace-  
 producing and disarming, the self-sacrificing and holy,  
 which is of one God and of Zoroaster the Prophet.

## SONG 5

**Good thoughts, good words, good deeds****Avesta:**

Humatanām, hukhtanām, hvarshtanām,  
 Yadachā, anyadachā, verezyamna-nāmchā,  
 Vāverezyamna-nāmchā mahi aibijaretārō,  
 Naenaestārō, yathanā vōhunām mahi.  
 Vispa humata, vispa hukhta,  
 Vispa hvarshta baodhōvarshta.  
 Vispa humata, vispa hukhta, vispa hvarshta  
 Vahishtem Anguhim ashaeta.  
 “Ashem” para ahmāi vōhū vahishtem  
 Chinasti, yatha khaetave khaetātem.

**English:**

We are the praisers and propagators of the Good Thoughts,  
 Good Words and Good Deeds, which, here as well as  
 elsewhere, have been done or will yet be done, in order  
 that we may belong to the Good.  
 All Good Thoughts, all Good Words and all Good Deeds  
 are the outcome of Wisdom.  
 All Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds lead us  
 on to Bahesht.  
 Just as one acknowledges the kinship for one's own kinsmen,  
 so does one acknowledge the highest Good for Him, by  
 the “Holy Order.”

## SONG 6

## Salvation

## Avesta :

Ushtā ahmāi yehmāi ushtā kahmāichit !  
 Vase-kshyās Mazdāō dāyāt Ahurō !  
 Utayuiti tevishi gat Tōi vasem'hi,  
 Ashem deredyāi tat mōi dāō ārmaite,  
 Rāyō ashish vangheush gaem mananghō.  
 At hvō *vangheush vahyō* nō aibi-jamyāt,  
 Ye nāō erezush savanghō pathō sishōit,  
 Ahyā angheush astvatō managhaschā,  
 Haithyeng ā-stish yeng ā shaeti Ahurō,  
 Aredrō Thwāvās huzentush spentō Mazdā.

## English :

"Salvation's hail be his, his whosoe'er he may be !  
 May the All-ruling send it, He supreme o'er strife !  
 Long lasting strength be ours ; of Thee we ask it ;  
 For the upholding Right, this holy zeal, vouchsafe us  
 Rich power, blest rewards, the Good Mind's life.  
 Yes, that *summum bonum* may he gain surer,  
 Who hath for us straight paths of grace explored,  
 Of this life bodily the use, of that the mental,  
 In the eternal realms where Ahura dwells,  
 Like Thee, noble and august, O Mazda LORD ! "

## SONG 7

## The Path to the Lord I

Avesta :

Vōhu Thwā mananghā, vōhu Thwā ashā  
 Vanghuyāō Thwā chistōish Mazdā !  
 Shyaothuāishchā vachebishchā pairi-jasāmaide,  
 Nemakhyāmahi ishuidyāmahi Ahurā !  
 Vispāish humatāish, vispāish hukhtāish  
 Vispāish hvarshtāish pairi-jasāmaide.  
 Sraeshtām at Tōi kelirpem kehrpām .  
 A'vaedayamahi Mazdā Ahurā !  
 Imā raochāō barezishtem barezemanām  
 Avat yāt hvare avāchī.

English :

O Mazda ! with Good Mind and through holiness, and  
 with deeds and words of Good Wisdom draw we near  
 to Thee.  
 O Ahura ! we bow to Thee and we are indebted to Thee.  
 We approach Thee with all Good Thoughts, all Good Words  
 and all Good Deeds.  
 O Almighty ! we express the Best Light of all lights, called  
 the Sun, as the most beautiful embodiment of Thee.

## SONG 8

## The Path to the Lord II

## Avesta :

Ashā kat Thwā daresām'hi  
 Manaschā vōhu vaedemno,  
 Gātūmchā Ahurāi sevishtāi  
 Seraoshem Mazdāi?  
 Anā mātūrā mazishtem vāurōi  
 Maidi khrafastrā hizvā.  
 Vōhu gaidi mananghā dāidi  
 Ashā-dāō daregāyū;  
 Ahmaibyāchā Ahurā yā daibishvatō  
 Dvaeshāō taurvayāmā.

## English :

" O Holiness ! when shall we see thee,  
 And thou Good Mind, as we discover  
 Obedience, the Path to the Lord,  
 To Mazda, the most beneficent ?  
 With that Manthra will we teach  
 Foul heretics faith on our Lord.  
 Come with the Good Mind and give us  
 Asha-gifts, O Thou eternal !  
 Grant that to us by whose aid  
 We may crush the evils of the evil."

## SONG 9

## The Spiritual Leader

Avesta :

Ke verethrem jā Thwā pōi senghā yōi henti ?  
 Chithrā mōi dām ahubish ratūm chizdi,  
 At hōi vōhū Seraoshō jantū mananghā  
 Mazdā, ahmāi yehināi vashi kahmāichit.  
 Yathā ahu vairyō athā  
 Ratūsh ashāt chit hachā ;  
 Vangheush dazdā mananghō  
 Shyaothnanām angheush Mazdāi ;  
*Kshathremchā Ahurāi ā yim*  
*Dregubyō dadat vāstārem.*

English :

"Who smite victorious, guarding Thy doctrines ?  
 Show us a folk-lord inspired with power,  
 Then come Obedience with Good Mind unto him,  
 Mazda, to whom Thou dost wish it soe'er."  
 As is the will of the Lord so is also the Spiritual Leader  
 through all Righteousness.  
 The gift of Good Mind is for all the World's workers for  
 Ahura Mazda.  
*The kingdom of Ahura for him who gives to the Poor their*  
*bread.*



## SONG 10

**Those who Fought for Righteousness****Avesta :**

Yenghe hātām āat yesne paiti  
 Vanghō, Mazdāō Ahurō vaethā  
 Ashāt hachā, yāōnghāmchā  
 Tāscha tāōschā yazamaide.  
 Gayehe Marethnō ashaonō fravashīm yazamaide;  
 Zarathushtrahe Spitāmahe idha ashaonō,  
 Ashīmcha fravashīmcha yazamaide;  
 Kavōish Vishtāspahe fravashīm ashaonō,  
 Isatvāstrahe ashaonō fravashīm yazamaide :  
 — *Yoi ashāi vaonarē.*

**English :**

We adore those men and women, who among all existing  
 beings are good for adoration, and whose knower is  
 Ahura Mazda through Righteousness.  
 We adore the Fravashi of Gayomard the Holy.  
 We adore here the holy Fravashi of Spitama Zarathushtra  
 the Holy.  
 We adore the Fravashi of Gustasp the King.  
 We adore the Fravashi of Isatvastra the Holy :  
 — *These who fought for Righteousness.*

## SONG 11

## The Gifts from Ahura Mazda

## Avesta :

Dāyāō ne, Ahura Mazda !  
 A'sū khāthrem, āsū thrāitīm, āsū jitīm,  
 Pouru khāthrem, pouru thrāitem, pouru jitīm,  
 Spānō, urune ushi, Mazda !  
 Dāyāō ne, Ahura Mazda !  
 Yā ne afrasāōnghāō nūremcha  
 Yavaechatāite *Vahishtem Ahūm*,  
 Raochanghem vispō khāthrem,  
 Vanghāōcha mizde, vanghāōcha sravahi,  
 Urunaecha dareghe havanghe.

## English :

Grant us, O Mazda ! swift beatitude, speedy protection,  
 smart life :  
 Complete bliss, complete protection, complete life, along  
 with wisdom and intelligence for the Soul !  
 Grant us, O Ahura ! that which may be, now and for ever,  
 instructive to us for the *Best Existence* (Paradise) of  
 Holy Light and Entire Bliss, as a good reward of  
 prayers and purity of the Soul !

## SONG 12

## We Praise These

## Avesta :

Ushi Ahurahe Mazdāō yazamaide  
 Darethrāi mātīrahe spentahe;  
 Khratūm Ahurahe Mazdāō yazamaide  
 Marethrāi mātīrahe spentahe;  
*Hizvām* Ahurahe Mazdāō yazamaide  
 Fravākāi mātīrahe spentahe.  
 Aom gairīm yazamaide yim ushidāūm  
 Ushidarenem, paiti asni paiti kshafne;  
 Adhāt anyaeshām ashaonām frakshti  
 Fravareta Gaokerenahe Mazdadhātahe.

## English :

We praise the intelligence of Ahura Mazda, in order to  
 grasp the Holy Word.  
 We praise the wisdom of Ahura Mazda, in order to study  
 the Holy Word.  
 We praise the *logos* of Ahura Mazda, in order to speak  
 forth the Holy Word.  
 We adore, every day and night, the mount Ushidarena,  
 the Giver of Intelligence.  
 Beloved of the Mazda-made Gaokerena, we praise him the  
 more, more than any other of the Pious.

## SONG 13

## Zoroastrian Blessings

Avesta :

Hanaemāchā zaemāchā, Mazdā Ahurā !  
 Thwahi rafnāhi daregāyū aeshāchā,  
 Thwā emavantaschā buyamā, rapōishchā  
 Tū ne dareghemchā ushtāchā hātām hudāstemā !  
 Thwōi staotarashchā māthranashchā Ahurā !  
 Mazdā aogemadaechā usmahichā,  
 Visāmadaechā hyat mizdem mavaethem  
 Fradadāthā daenābyō Mazdā Ahurā !  
 Ahyā āthrō verezeuā Mazdā !  
 Thwā Thwā pairi-jasāmaide Ahurā !

English :

May we deserve, O Ahura Mazda ! long life by Thy grace,  
 and may we desire it !  
 May we be strong also by Thy will !  
 May'st Thou favour us with bliss for long !  
 O Thou most bountiful of all beings !  
 May we be spoken of, O Ahura ! as Thy worshippers and  
 Māthra-speakers !  
 May we agree to that and act accordingly !  
 O Mazda ! bestow this gift most meet upon us, who are  
 deserving co-religionists !  
 Through the agency of Thy *Living Element*  
 O Mazda ! approach we *Thee and Thee alone* !

## SONG 14

## A Soliloquy

## Avesta :

Tat Thwā peresā eresh nōi vaochā Ahurā :  
 Kasnā zāthā patā ashahyā pōuruyō ?  
 Kasnā kheng staremchā dāt adhwanem ?  
 Kē yā māō ukshyeiti nerefsaiti Thwat ?  
 Tāchit Mazdā vasem'hi anyāchā viduye.  
 Tat Thwā peresā eresh nōi vaochā Ahurā :  
 Kasnā deretā zāmchā ade-nabāōschā  
 Avapa-stōish ? ke apō urvarāōschā ?  
 Ke vātāish dvānmai-byaschā yaoget āsū ?  
 Kasnā vangheush Mazdā dāmish mananghō ?

## English :

"This we ask Thee ; aright Ahura tell us :  
 Who in production first was Asha's father ?  
 Who suns and stars save Thee their path hath given ?  
 Who thins the waning moon, or waxing filleth ?  
 This and still other works, Lord, would we know.  
 This we ask Thee ; aright Ahura tell us :  
 Who ever earth and sky from falling guardeth ?  
 Who hath save Thee brought forth rivers and forests ?  
 Who with the winds hath yoked racers to storm-clouds ?  
 Who of the good man's grace ever was source ?"

## SONG 15

## “ Work is Worship ”

Avesta :

Ava padhō, ava zaste, ava  
 Ushi dārayadhwem, Mazdayasna  
 Zarathushtrayō, dāityanām  
 Rathwyanām hvarshtanām  
 Shyaothnanām varezāi.  
 Pairi adhāityanām  
 A-rathwyanām duz-varshtanām  
 Shyaothnanām varezāi.  
 Verezyatāmcha idha vōhu vāstrya,  
 Uyamua an-uyamuāish dasta.

English:

Hold ready, O Mazdayasnian Zoroastrians ! your feet,  
 your hands and your intelligence ;  
 In order to perform good deeds, according to the Law and  
 at the right time.  
 In order to avoid bad deeds, not according to the Law and  
 at the wrong time.  
 Here acquire industrial accomplishments.  
 Here give assistance to the needy.

## SONG 16

**May the Demon be Destroyed !****Avesta :**

Apa nasyāt druksh !  
 Durāt druksh vinasyāt !  
 Apākhedhre apa-nasyehe,  
 Mā merenchainīsh gaethāō  
 Astavaitīsh ashahe !  
 Pāta nō tbishyantat pairi,  
 Mazdāōschā Armaitīschā !  
 Hazangrem baeshazanām,  
 Baevare baeshazanām !  
 Jasa ne avanghe Mazda !

**English :**

May the Demon of Falsehood be destroyed !  
 May the Evil Spirit be off !  
 May the Demon disappear towards the North, in order  
 that the good creations of the corporeal world may not  
 be ruined !  
 O Mazda and O Spenta Armaiti ! save us from this  
 misery !  
 A thousandfold happiness be ours !  
 Ten-thousandfold happiness be ours !  
 O Almighty ! reach Thou to us for this help !

## SONG 17

## Ideal Man and Woman

## Avesta :

Nāirikāmcha ashaonīm yazamaide,  
 Frāyō-humatām, frāyō-hukhtām,  
 Frāyō-hvarshtām, hush-hāmsāstām,  
 Ratu-kshathrām, ashaonīm,  
 Yām A'rmaiti Spentām,  
 Yāōscha-te ghenāō, Ahura Mazda!  
 Naremcha ashavanem yazamaide  
 Frāyō-humatām frāyō-hukhtām,  
 Frāyō-hvarshtām, visto-fraoreitim,  
 Ashavanem ashahe ratūm yazamaide.

## English :

We praise the pious Woman, well-versed in good thoughts,  
 words and deeds, well-educated, honouring the husband,  
 holy and bounteous like Spenta A'rmaiti and Thy other  
 female angels, O Ahura Mazda !

We praise the pious Man, well-versed in good thoughts,  
 words and deeds, steadfast in piety, and "the holy lord  
 of the ritual order.



## SONG 18

### Morning Prayer

#### Avesta :

Nemase-tē hushbāmī ! Nemase-tē hushbāmī !  
 Aetat dīm vīspanām mazīstem dazdyāi,  
 Ahūmcha ratūmchā yim Ahurem Mazdām,  
 Snathāi anghrahe mainyeush drvatō,  
 Snathāi aeshmahe khravidraosh,  
 Snathāi Māzainyanām daevanām,  
 Snathāi vispanām daevanām.  
 Vanghucha vanghuyāōscha āfrināmahi,  
 Vispayāō ashaonō stōish, haithyāicha  
 Bavāithyāicha, bushyāithyāicha.

#### English :

Hail ! O Dawn ! Hail to Thee !

Hail ! in order to sacrifice all that is greatest to Him, who  
 is Ahura Mazda, the Corporeal as well as Spiritual Lord.

In order to crush the evil Angra Mainyu, to destroy the  
 demon of Anger, deadly-armed ; in order to crush the  
 devils of Māzandaran ; in order to annihilate all evil  
 spirits.

We here respectfully remember all pious Men and Women  
 of all the World, all that are, and were and are to be.

## SONG 19

## Night Prayer

## Avesta :

Sraoshem ashīm huraodhem,  
 Verethrā-jañem frādat-gaethem,  
 Ashahe ratūm yazamaide ;  
 Yō anavang-habdemnō zaenaugha  
 Nipāiti Mazdāō dāmān ;  
 Yō anavang-habdemnō zaenaugha  
 Nish-haurvaiti Mazdāō dāmān ;  
 Yō ayāncha kshafnascha yuidhyeiti  
 Māzainyaeibyō hadha daevaeibyō ;  
 Yō hareta aiwyākshtacha gaethayāō.

## English :

We respectfully here remember the Angel Sraosha, the holy and the beautiful, the earthly-promoter and the victorious holy lord.

We remember him, who, himself awake, protects the creations of Ahura ; who, himself awake, preserves the creatures of Mazda.

We remember him, who fights against the devils of Māzandarān, all day and night.

We remember him, who is the Protector and Supervisor of the World.

## SONG 20

## Confirmation

## Avesta and Farsi :

Razishtayāō chistayāō  
 Mazdadhātayāō ashaonyāō,  
 Daenayāō vanghuyāō  
 Māzdayasnōish Zarathushtrōish.  
*Din beh rāst va darōst*  
*Ke khódāe bar khalk ferastādeh,*  
*In hast ke Zarthósht ávórdeh ;*  
*Din din-é Zarthósht, din-é Hormuzd,*  
*Dádeh Zarthósht. Ashaone ashem,*  
*Ashem vōhū, vahishtem asti.*

## English :

“Success” of the Mazda-made, the truest and holy religion  
 of divine knowledge !

“Success” of the good Mazdayasnian Zoroastrian Faith !

*That's the good, righteous and unpolluted religion, which*  
*Ahura Mazda has sent to this world, and which is*  
*brought to us by Zoroaster the Prophet.*

*The Zoroastrian Faith of Ahura Mazda is granted to*  
*Zoroaster for his Righteousness.*

Righteousness is good, righteousness is the best.

## SONG 21

## The Angel of Victory

## Avesta:

Ahe raya kharenanghacha,  
 Ainghe ama verethra-ghnacha,  
 Ahe yasna yazatanām tem,  
 Yazāi surunvata yasna  
 Verethra-ghnem Ahura-dhātem, yāish  
 Dātāish paoiryāish Ahurahe.  
 Aat ahmāi anavastemō :  
 ‘Ama ahmi amavastemō,  
 Verethra ahmi verethra-vastemō,  
 Baeshaza ahmi baeshazyōtemō.’

## English :

For his Majesty and for his glory, for his courage and for  
 his success may we adore with audible prayers, the  
 Mazda-made Angel of Victory, in accordance with  
 Ahura's primary Laws.

So speaks to us the strongest :  
 ‘In strength am I the strongest,  
 In victory the most winning,  
 In health the most healing.’

## SONG 22

## The Great Dead

## Pazend :

Zarthōst Spitamān ashō farōhar,  
 Gustāsp Shāh Lohrāsp Shāh,  
 Jāmāsp Habūb, Ardāé Virāf,  
 Ardā Farvash, Ádarbād Mārāspand,  
 Mōbad Shāpur, Mōbad Sheheriār,  
 Mōbad Hormazdiār, Ervad Rāmyār,  
 Mōbad Neryōsang Dhaval yād bād  
 Anusheh ravān ravāni. Hamā  
 Farvash ashōān aēdar yād  
 Bād anusheh ravān ravāni !

## English :

May here be remembered the holy Farohar of Zoroaster !  
 May here be remembered the holy souls of King Gustāsp,  
 the Son of King Lohorāsp, of Jāmāsp Habub, of Ardā  
 Virāf, of Ádardad Mārāspand, of Mobad Shāpur, of  
 Mobad Sheheriār, of Mobad Hormazdiār, of Ervad  
 Rāmyār, and of Neryosang Dhaval !  
 May these holy spirits, now in Paradise, be here all  
 remembered !

## SONG 23

## In Praise of the Prophet

## Farsi :

Zaráthósht Asfantamán-é guzín,  
Ke bádá ba rúhash hazár áfarín.  
Rasul-é khodávand-é ján-áfarín,  
Khódávand-é aajáz-ó bórhán-ó dín.  
Haméh rímani az Jehán dúr kard,  
Chu khurshíd álam pór az núr kard.  
Harán kas buvad bar rehash bégumán,  
Nabínad gamí ú ba har dó Jehán.  
Shah-é aulíá akmal-é ambíá,  
Hámeh gumrehán-rá ba din reh numá.

## English :

A thousand blessings for the Soul of Spitman Zarthosht,  
the selected one !  
He is the Messenger of God the creator of the Soul, and who  
is the lord of skill, reason and creed.  
He removed all evil from the World and filled the whole  
creation with glory as of the Sun.  
He who adheres to the path showed by him does not find  
sorrow in both the worlds.  
He is the leader of all God's creatures, the best and the  
most perfect Messenger of God.

## SONG 24

## In Praise of Ormuzd

## Farsi :

- “Khódávandé ján ó khódáé raván,  
“Khódávandé hasti-deh ó meherbán.  
“Karím ó rahím ó taváná ó haé,  
“Alím astó álam alá kulle shaé.  
“Khódávandé bud ó khódávándé júd,  
“Ze ketmé adam kard paedá vójúd.  
“Jehán ó zamán ó makán jumlé zúst,  
“Vujúdé hamé mumken az faizé úst.  
“Zé hekmat hamerá padídár kard,  
“Basí qudraté khísh ezhár kard.  
“Raván ó tan ó jesm ó ján áfaríd,  
“Kherad dar tané mardumán áfaríd.  
“Ba barr ó ba bahar ányché gardad padíd,  
“Ba faizé khódávand dárád umíd.  
“Shahé bichegun dávaré bíhamál,  
“Bapírámané ú na gardad zavál.  
“Khabír ast ó dánandéhé rázé gaib  
“Basír ast ó sattáré har gunéh aib.  
“Kherad dád ó akl ó hush ó ráé dín,  
“Khodávandé bá dánésh ó bikarín.

SONG 24—(*Continued*)

## In Praise of Ormuzd

**English:**

Ormuzd is the master of the soul and the lord of the spirit.  
The lord He of life and the merciful, liberal, kind and potent  
being.

He is the knower and has a thorough knowledge of every-  
thing.

The lord also of existence and of generosity,

He made the existing from the non-existing.

The world, time and place all belong to Him.

The existence of living beings is by His grace.

He created all these by His wisdom and through these He  
expressed His powers.

He created both the body and the soul.

Created He wisdom in mankind.

Whatever may appear on land and in ocean has hopes for  
His grace.

He is the sovereign, without equals or p<sup>er</sup>ers.

Destruction will never appear round about Him.

He is the knower of the unknown and is the seer and  
tolerator of our deficiencies,

He gives us wisdom, reason, sagacity and faith, He who is  
the learned Lord and is unrivall'd.



## SONG 25

**Hail! Spitama Zarathushtra****Avesta:**

- “Ushtā nō zātō āthrava  
 “Yō Spitāmō Zarathushtrō !  
 “Yehe zāthaeche vakshaecha  
 “Urvāsen āpō urvarāōscha ;  
 “Yehe zāthaeche vakshaecha  
 “Ukshin āpō urvarāōscha.  
 “Yehe zāthaeche vakshaecha  
 “Ushtatātem ni-mravanta  
 “Vispāō spentō-dātāō dāmān.  
 “Yehe zāthaeche vakshaecha  
 “Apām vījasāiti vanguhi  
 “Daena Māzdayasnish vīspāish,  
 “Avi karshvān yāish hafta.  
 “Yim isen Ameshāō Spenta  
 “Ahūmcha ratūmcha gaethanām,  
 “Staotārem ashahe yat  
 “Mazishtaheche, vahishtaheche, sraeshtaheche,  
 “Paiti-frakshtāremcha daenayāō yat  
 “Haitinām vahishtayāō sraeshtayāō.  
 “Zarathushtrahe ashaonō fravashīm yazamaide.

SONG 25—(*Continued*)**Hail! Spitama Zarathushtra****English:**

Hail! Zarathushtra of Spitamas is born unto us as the Prophet!

With His birth and with His growth all the waters and the vegetations were appeased.

With His birth and with His growth the waters and the vegetations became flourishing.

With His birth and with His growth all the creations of Spenta began to hail Him as the best of best.

And with His birth and His growth the good Mázdāyasnian religion began to spread far and wide over all the seven Keshwars.

Him desired all the Bountiful Immortals as the temporal as well as spiritual Lord of the lands; also as the admirer of the highest and best righteousness, and as the propounder of the Faith which is the best of all the existing ones.

Here we respectfully remember the holy Farohar of Zarathushtra.

## SONG 26

## The Great Zoroaster

## English:

The Great Zoroaster, forsaking  
A world of strife and deceit,  
'Mid solitude wild and alluring  
Had found a serene retreat.  
And simple his faith, and unchanging  
Among the contending creeds;  
Through all his long life illustrating  
'Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds.'  
To Earth's nations he was proclaiming:  
Away with the myth-grown creeds!  
But practise the Love-laws unceasing:  
'Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds.'  
He taught all to cast away, scorning,  
Their ancient and cruel creeds;  
And led them to practise, while living,  
'*Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds.*'  
At last came the first gleam of dawning—  
The crowds hailed it loud and long—  
While bards of the hills began singing,  
With joy, now, their morning song.  
All nature awoke then from slumb'ring,  
Glad zephyrs woo'd stream and plain,  
While mountain and sky seemed repeating  
The song o'er and o'er again.

—*Aristo.*

## SONG 27

**We hear the voice of Zarthost say :**

**English:**

We hear the voice of Zarthost say,  
To all the world,—for so He could—  
Sweet words which we mankind may weigh  
For our welfare, for others' good.  
We hear His voice ring thro' our hearts,  
Across the sunbeams' hue ;  
We see He *still* moves midst us all  
His servants leal and true.  
Years roll on, ages have passed,  
Yet not His fragrance -- sweet and bright ;  
His good old Faith, His name and fame  
Have lost not e'en a whit of light.  
His words are few, and fewer His laws,  
They still ring thro' and thro' ;  
Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds are all  
The seeds that He did strew.  
We hear He sings, aye, see He plays  
His game in His own HOUSE of SONG ;  
Let's bless His holy Frohar rare—  
How few for Him *here* live and long !  
O hear the voice of Zarthost say  
Good Words which all mankind must weigh !  
O hark He comes along His Path  
With Barsam twigs this aftermath !

—*Ruby.*

## SONG 28

**Hail! Gracious Ormuzd****English:**

Hail! Gracious Ormuzd, author of all good,  
 Spirit of beauty, purity and light;  
 Teach us like Thee to hate dark deeds of night,  
 And battle ever with the hellish brood  
 Of Ahriman, dread prince of evil mood—

. . . . .  
 . . . . .  
 . . . . .

Grant us, bright Ormuzd, in Thy ranks to  
 stand,

All valiant soldiers faithful to the end;  
 So when we leave this life's familiar strand,  
 Bound for the great Unknown, shall we com-  
 mend

Our souls, if soul survive, into Thy hand—  
 Fearless of fate, if Thou, Thine aid will lend.

—*Laing.*

## SONG 29

## The Bountiful Guardians

Avesta :

Tāō ahmi nmāne jamyāresh  
 Yāō ashaonām kshnūtascha,  
 Ashayascha paiti-zantayascha !  
 Jamyān ithra ashāōnām vanguhīsh  
 Sūrāō spentāō fravashayō,  
 Ashōish baeshaza hachimnāō,  
 Zem-frathangha, dānu-drāzangha,  
 Hvare-barezangha, ishēē vanghangām,  
 Paitishtātōē ātaranām, frasha-  
 Vakshyāi rayāmcha kharenang-hāmcha !

English :

May this House receive the pleasure, blessing and consolation of the Pious !  
 May here reach the holy and the good, the brave and the bountiful Farohars of the Righteous !  
 May they carry along with them remedies for the pious, remedies as spacious as the Earth, as prolonged as the river, and as lofty as the Sun !  
 In order that they may fulfil the objects of the good, that they may oppose the evil, and promote the glory and welfare of the pure in heart !

## SONG 30

## “God Save the King!”

**Avesta :**

Dāyāō tem kshathrahe dainghu-paitim,  
 Uparāi amāi, uparāi verethrāi,  
 Uparāi kshathrāi ; kshathremcha paiti-astim,  
 Dareghō-kshathrem kshathrahe, daregō-jitim  
 Ushatānahe, dravatātem tanubyō !  
 Vavane buye rathwya manangha,  
 Rathwya vachangha, rathwya shyaothna !  
 Afrināmahi dareghem java, ushta java,  
 Avanghe narām ashaonām ; Vahishtem  
 Ahūm raochanghem vispō-khāthrem !

**English :**

God give the Sov'reign Ruler of our Land more and more  
 valour, greater and greater success and larger and  
 larger Empire !  
 Also, loyalty of his ryots, long reign of his Empire, long-  
 evity of life and strength of body !  
 May he be glorious through worthy thoughts, worthy  
 words and worthy achievements !  
 May he live long and happy for the welfare of righteous  
 peoples, and may he gain in the end that Best Existence  
 of holy light and entire bliss !

## A COMMON PRAYER

**Avesta :**

Nemasete Ahura Mazda !  
 Nemasete Ahura Mazda !  
 Nemasete Ahura Mazda !  
 Ahurem Mazdām raevantem  
 Kharenangu-hantem yazamaide ;  
 Zarathustrahe Spitāmahe idha  
 Ashaonô fravashîm yazamaide ;  
 Ameshe spente hu-dhâûnghô hu-kshathra :  
 Vôhu manascha, Ashem vahishtemcha,  
 Kshathrem vairîm, Spentām ârmaitîmcha, ...10  
 Haurvatâtem, Ameretâtemcha yazamaide.  
 Vispe Yazatâûnghô yazamaide :  
 Nemase-te Âtarsh Mazdâô Ahurahe—  
 Hudhâô mazishta yazata ;  
 Yazamaide Hvare-kshaetem ameshem raem  
 Aurvat-aspem ; Mithremcha vôuru-gaoitîm ;  
 Sraoshem ashîm hu-raodhem verethrâ-janem,  
 Frâdat-gaethem ashavanem ashahe ratûm ;  
 Aredvîm sûrâm anâhitâm perethu-frâkâm,  
 Baeshazyâm vi-dævâm Ahurô-tkaeshâm ; ...20  
 Mâônghem gao-chithrem ashavanem yazamaide ;  
 Tishtrîm stârem kharenangu-hantemcha ;  
 Verethra-ghnem Ahura-dhâtem yazatem ;  
 Yazamaide dravâspâm surâm Mazdadhâtâm ;  
 Haomem zâirîm, Haomem frâshmîm,  
 Frâdat-gaethem, Haomem duraoshemcha,  
 Ashavanem ashahe ratûm yazamaide.



**A Common Prayer—(continued.)**

Paoiryanãm tkaeshanãm,  
 Paoiryanãm sâsnô-gûshãm,  
 Idha ashaonãm ashaoninãmcha.....30

Ahumcha daenãmcha baodhascha  
 Urvânecha fravashîmcha yazamaide,  
 Yôi ashâi vaonare.

Ashaonãm vanguhîsh sûrâô spentâô  
 Fravashayô yazamaide, yâô hacha  
 Gayât Marethnat â  
 Saoshyantât verethra-ghnat.

Nemem Kavaem kharenô,  
 Nemô Airyane vaejahi,  
 Nemô saoke Mazda-dhâite, .....40

Nemô âpe dâityayâô,  
 Nemem ashaonô stôish,  
 Nemô Gâthôâ pancha  
 Spitâmahe Zarathushtrahe,  
 Yâô afsmanivâô vachas-tashtivat,  
 Mat âzaintîsh, mat paiti-frasâô.

Yânem te yâsâm'hi Ahura!  
 Mazâûntem tem ne dâyata  
 Yenghe dâiti paiti vaughô,  
 Nisrit an-aiwi drukhti! .....50  
 Mazda ishtîm te jaidhyâm'hi,  
 Pôuru-saredhãm amavaitîm,

## A Common Prayer—(continued.)

Frazantîmcha khâparâm,  
 Yenghâô pôurucha berezyân.  
 Imat vô Ahura, imat zemô,  
 Imat urvarâô, imat bereza Ahura  
 Kshathrya apâm napô aurvat-aspa;  
 Tat nô dâyata yûzem môshucha,  
 Âsucha hathra ana gâthwya vacha  
 Haithyâ-varshâtâm hyat.....60  
 Vasnâ ferashôtemem.

Us-môi uzâreshvâ Ahurâ !  
 Ârmaitî tevîshîm dasvâ,  
 Spenishtâ mainyû Mazdâ,  
 Vanghuyâ zavô-âdâ  
 Ashâ hazô emavat vôhû,  
 Mananghâ feseratûm.

Rafedhrâi vôuru-chashâne dôishî  
 Moi yâ-ne abifrâ  
 Tâ kshthrahyâ Ahurâ yâ .....70  
 Vangheush ashish mananghô;  
 Frô spentâ ârmaite ashâ  
 Daenâô fradakshyâ.

Daenâm vanguhîm Mâzdayasnîm,  
 Yazamaide Zarathushtrîm, yâ  
 Hâitinâmchâ bûshyeinti-nâmchâ,  
 Mazishtâchâ, vahishtâchâ, sraeshtâchâ.

## A Common Prayer—(continued.)

Ferâ Manyaeibyô râônghe,  
 Vase yâitîm, vase sheitîm,  
 Yâish upairi âya zemâ, .....80  
 Gaobîsh shyainti.

Nemanghâ ashâi uzdatâ,  
 Paitî avat stuyamâ,  
 Nôit ahmât âzyâônîm,  
 Nôit vivâpem kshtâ,  
 Mâzdayasnôish aoi vîsô ;  
 Nôit ushtânahe chinmâni.

Dasta amem verethra-ghnem,  
 Dasta geush khâthrô-nahîm,  
 Dasta narâm pôurutâtem, .....90  
 Stâhyanâm vyâkhananâm,  
 Vanatâm chithra-avanghâm.

Yazata pôuru-kharenangha,  
 Yazata pôuru-baeshaza,  
 Chithra vô buyâresh masânâô,  
 Chithra vô zavanô savô,  
 Chithrem bôit kharenô,  
 Yuzemnâi âpô dâyata.

Yatha-nô âûnghâm shâtô-manâô,  
 Vahishtô urvânô, khâthra-vaitîsh .....100  
 Tanvô hentô vahishtô anghush ;  
 Âkâôschôit Âhuire Mazda jasentâm ;

## A Common Prayer—(continued)

Asha vahishta, asha sraeshta  
Daresâma Thwâ, pairi Thwâ jamyâma.

Yathâ Tû i Mazdâ Ahurâ  
Menghâchâ vaochaschâ dâôschâ  
Vareschchâ yâ vôhu. Athâ  
Tôî dademahi, athâ chîshmahi  
Athâ nemakhyâmahi, athâ ishuidyâmahi.

Dâidî-at nerâsh Mazdâ-Ahurâ ! .....110  
Ashâûnô asha-chinanghô,  
Aidyûsh vâstryeng dareghâi  
Izâi bezvaite hakhmaine,  
Ahmaibyâchâ ahmâ rafnanghô.

Ahmâi anghat vahishtem ye  
Nôi vidvâô vaochât haithîm,  
Mathrem yim haurvatâtô  
Ashahyâ ameretâtaschâ ;  
Mazdâi avat kshathrem hyat  
Hôi vôhû vakshat mananghâ.....120  
Yastâ mantâ pôuruyô,  
Raochebîsh rôithwen khâthrâ ;  
Hvô khrathwâ dâmish ashem  
Yâ dêrayat vahishtem manô.  
Tâ Mazdâ mainyû ukshyô ye  
Â nûremchît Ahurâ hâmo !

## A Common Prayer—(continued)

Ashem vôhû,  
 Vahishtem asti ;  
 Ushtâ asti,  
 Ushtâ ahmâi.....130  
 Hyat ashâi  
 Vahishtâi ashem.

Vainît ahmi nmâne,  
 Sraoshô asrushtîm, âkshtish anâkshtîm,  
 Râitish arâitîm, ârmaitish tarômaitîm,  
 Arshukhô-vâksh mithaokhtem-vâchîm.  
 Yatha ahmya Ameshâô Spenta,  
 Sraoshâdha ashyâdha paitishân,  
 Vanghûsh yasnâscha vahmâscha,  
 Vôhû yasnemcha vahmemcha, .....140  
 Hu-beretîmcha ushta-beretîmcha.  
 Â dareghât khâbairyât !  
 Mâ yave imat nmânem  
 Khâthravat kharenô frazahit !  
 Mâ khâthravaiti ishtish ;  
 Mâ khâthravaiti âsna-frazaintish !  
 Khâthrô-disyehe paiti ashôishcha  
 Vanghuyâô dareghem hakhma !

*Gunâh guzârishn, kerfeh afzâdishn, Ashem!*  
 Atha jamyât yathâ âfrinâm'hi ! .....150

**A Common Prayer—(continued)****English :**

We bow to Thee, O Ahura Mazda !

We worship the Great Lord Ormuzd, the one who is brilliant and full of glory.

We adore here the holy Fravashi of Spitama Zarathushtra the holy.

We respectfully remember the well-created and good-ruling Bountiful Immortals, viz., Behman (Good Mind), Ardibahesht (Best Purity), Sheherevar (Sovereignty), Aspandád (Humility), Khordád (Bliss) and Amardád (Immortality).

We praise all the Yazads, viz., the Mazda-made and highest angel Ádar (Fire); the ever-burning and fast-going angel Khorshed (Sun); the many-seeded Meher (Light); the beautiful, victoriously-smiting, world-promoting and Holy Lord Sarosh (Obedience); the brave, unpolluted, wide-flowing, health-giving, Daeva-shunning and Ahura-loving angel Ardvisura (Waters); the world-guarding Mahábokhtár (Moon); the bright and shining star Tishtar (Sirius); the Mazda-made angel Behráam (Victory); the courageous Ahura-created and holy Dravásp (animals); the golden Homa, the world-promoting Homa and the health-giving Homa, the holy lord of righteousness.

We here too respectfully admire the life, conscience, wisdom, soul and guardian-spirit of the holy, who were the first in faith, the foremost in receiving the word of Ormuzd and who fought

**A Common Prayer—(continued)**

for righteousness. We adore the holy, good and courageous Farohars of all pious people, from the time of Gayomard to the victory-bringing benefactor Soshyós.

Salutation to the Kyanian glory, to the country of Iran, Ahura's gift; also to the waters of the Dáitya, to the creations of the holy and to Spitamán Zarathushtra's five Gáthic Hymns, which are in metres and verses together with commentaries and arguments!

O Lord! we desire from Thee a great boon, which Thou give to us, so that a better condition may accrue from generosity. O Lord! we seek, for our sake, great and varied gifts and self-supporting generation, who may be very helpful.

Grant us, O Ahura Mazda, O earth and O majestic, O fast-flowing and ruling waters! these gifts soon and speedily as a boon for chanting the holy Hymns. The best desire, yea, is the desire of doing righteous deeds.

“ Arise to us O Ahura!  
Through devotion send us force,  
Most bounteous spirit, Mazda!  
For our good invocation's offering;  
And mighty strength give Asha,  
And a thrift-lord with Thy Good Mind.

For grace, that we see Thee fully,  
Reveal to us, Mazda, Thy nature

**A Common Prayer—(continued)**

And Thy Kingdom's blessings, Lord,  
The rewards of Thine own good-minded,  
Yea, now, O Thou bounteous devotion,  
Through the Law light up our souls!"

The good Mazdayasnian Zoroastrian faith do we admire, which is the highest, the best and the most bountiful of all creeds that are, and of all that are to be. We pray with fervent prayers for the moving about as *they* will, and for the domineering as *Thou* wilt, of those that are well off in this world through the spiritual beings. So that we may not allow any injury or scarcity to be caused to the boroughs of the Mazdayasnians, at the risk neither of our bodies nor of our souls.

Give us courage and success; give us the happiness of this world and a good many beings, strong and social, successful and useful in public.

O all glorious and all health-giving Yazads! may full glories be proclaimed by you! May all profits of prayers and invocations be made known by you! Grant ye to every admirer of waters, verily, this glory.

In order that our minds may be delighted and our souls be purified,\* Also our bodies be best fitted for this world, on account of happiness.



**A Common Prayer—(continued)**

O Ahura Mazda ! may these come into prominence ! With the best righteousness and highest, we behold Thee, and attempt to reach Thee.

O Great Being ! That which is good Thou didst think and utter, Thou didst create and also accomplish. Thus do we give Thee and appreciate Thee and thus adore Thee.

O Ahura ! we bow to Thee likewise, and call ourselves Thy debtors.

Grant to us and also to those, who are Thy admirers, men who may be holy, desirous of holiness, active and hard-working for lasting prosperity and for fast friendship.

“~~To~~ him was that best of blessing,  
Who told us the truth, the discerning  
That Manthra which was the word  
Of health, right, and a life undying ;  
To Mazda shall be such a realm,  
As shall grow through His Holy Mind !

Who ~~first~~ thereon conceived :  
‘ Be the heavens clothed in stars ! ’  
By mind is the Law’s arranger,  
To uphold the devoted saint ;  
Both, Mazda, shalt Thou prosper ;  
Same Thou art and abidest ever.”

**A Common Prayer—(continued)**

Righteousness is good,  
Righteousness is best ;  
'Tis happiness to him  
Who's the purest of pure.

May within the precincts of this place, obedience rule over disobedience, peace rule over confusion, charity rule over avarice, civility rule over rudeness and truth rule over falsehood !

May, then, here the Bountiful Immortals desire devotion and benediction, good prayer and worship, good gift and healthy-gift through the Angel Sraosha !

May the same last for ever long !

May, now, happy glory and weal never forsake this place !

May also healthy and talented children never forget this house !

May here always remain lasting connections of all objects tending to prosperity, goodness and purity. O Purity ! Let there be here less and less of the undesirable and more and more of the desirable !

**Amen !!**

## REFERENCES

<b>Song</b>	<b>1.</b>	<b>LINES</b>	<b>1.</b>	Sarosh Bâj
			2, 3.	Duâ Nâm Setâyishn
			4—6.	Ashem Vôhû
			7, 8.	"Frâ-mraot": Yasna, Chapter 20
			9, 10.	Yasna, Ch. 60
"	2.	"	1—10.	Hôshbâm: Yasna, Ch. 8
"	3.	"	1—10.	Ushtavad Gâthâ: Yasna, Ch. 43
"	4.	"	1—10.	Din-nô Kalmô: Yasna, Ch. 12
"	5.	"	1—4.	Haptan Yasht: Yasna, Ch. 35
			5—8.	Duâ Vispa Humata
			9, 10.	"Frâ-mraot": Yasna, Ch. 20
"	6.	"	1—10.	Ushtavad Gâthâ: Yasna, Ch. 43
"	7.	"	1—10.	Haptan Yasht: Yasna, Ch. 36
"	8.	"	1—10.	Ahunavâd Gâthâ: Yasna, Ch. 28
"	9.	"	1—4.	Ushtavad Gâthâ: Yasna, Ch. 46
			5—10.	Ahunavar formula
"	10.	"	1—4.	Yasna, Ch. 21
			5—10.	Satum: Yasna, Ch. 59
"	11.	"	1—10.	Âtash Nyâish
"	12.	"	1—10.	Hormuzd Yasht
"	13.	"	1—8.	Haptan Yasht: Yasna, Ch. 41
			9, 10.	" " Yasna, Ch. 36
"	14.	"	1—10.	Ushtavad Gâthâ: Yasna, Ch. 44
"	15.	"	1—10.	Visparad, Ch. 15
"	16.	"	1—6.	"Kem nâ Mazdâ": Vendidad,
				Ch. 8
			7—10.	"Hazangrem": Yasna, Ch. 68
"	17.	"	1—10.	Aiwi-sruthrem Gâh
"	18.	"	1—7.	Hôshbâm: Yasna, Ch. 27
			8—10.	" " Yasna, Ch. 52

<b>Song 19.</b>	<b>LINES</b>	1—10.	Sarôsh Yasht: Yasna, Ch. 57
„ 20.	„	1—4.	Din-nô Kalmô: Din Yasht Kshnûman
		5—9.	Fârsi Ebârat
		9—10.	“Ashem Vôhû”
„ 21.	„	1—10.	Beherâm Yasht
„ 22.	„	1—10.	Satum Pâzend Nirang
„ 23.	„	1—10.	Pand-Námeh é Mullá Firóz
„ 24.	„	1—20.	„ „ „
„ 25.	„	1—20.	Farvardin Yasht
„ 26.	„	1—24.	Aristo's “Zoroaster”
„ 27.	„	1—24.	Ruby's “The Coming and the Passing of Zoroaster”
„ 28.	„	1—11.	Laing's “A Modern Zoroastrian”
„ 29.	„	1—10.	Duâ Tan darôsti: Yasna, Ch. 60
„ 30.	„	1—10.	Áfringân Strophe

---

**“A COMMON PRAYER”**

<b>LINES</b>	1—27.	Miscellaneous
„	28—37.	Satum: Yasna, Ch. 59
„	38—42.	Khôrshed Nyâish
„	43—44.	Ardui Sur Yasht
„	45—46.	Sarosh Yasht: Yasna, Ch. 57
„	47—61.	“Á hâtâmchâ”: Yasna, Ch. 65
„	62—73.	Ahunavad Gâthâ: Yasna, Ch. 28
„	74—87.	Din-nô Kalmô: Yasna, Ch. 12
„	88—98.	Mâh-bokhtâr Nyâish
„	99—104.	Hoshbâm: Yasna, Ch. 60
„	105—109.	Haptan Yasht: Yasna, Ch. 39
„	110—114.	„ „ „ 40
„	115—126.	Ahunavad Gâthâ: Yasna, Ch. 31
„	127—132.	Ashem Vôhû
„	133—148.	Duâ Tan Darôsti: Yasna, Ch. 60
„	149—150.	Miscellaneous



BOOK 3

HINTS ON REGULAR  
PARSEE PRAYERS



# Hints on Regular Parsee Prayers

---

## Prayer in General

“Speak to Him thou, for He hears  
And spirit with spirit can meet—  
Closer is He than breathing,  
And nearer than hands or feet.”

These are really appealing words of the great Poet Laureate. For prayer is a universal method practised in all ages, by all human beings, and in ancient as well as modern tongues, in order to secure *help* from a higher Being. Prayer is a contact key to pass the current of inward motive force from the human heart to the supreme reservoir of the infinite Divine Self. Prayer is a true expression of all human aspirations and is God's own token. In sincere exhortation of this *divine communion* Tennyson sang thus:—

“More things are wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.  
For what are men better than sheep or goats,  
That nourish a blind life within the brain,  
If *knowing God*, they lift not hands of prayer  
Both for themselves and those that call them friend!  
For so the whole round earth is, every way,  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.”

To the rough barbarian of the pre-Avestan times, ‘prayer’ was a rude and loud utterance of incantations or magic words to do harm or good to any one he pleased; while the prayer of



medieval days secured divine intervention and favour from his gods by repeating formulas from the sacred writings and by the observance of ritual. But to the advanced devotee of the higher order, prayers are true links to make necessary connections with the supreme Being, Ahura, by the sincere and silent offering of the heart on the altar of the Living Element.

That there is nothing more powerful than Prayer is incidentally shown in the opening chapter of the Sarosh Yasht Hâdokht: "Prayer is good; it is best for the people of the world. It is a weapon against the worst of Darvands. A prayer poured forth from the sincere heart is a great help to mankind; it is a shield against what is evil and removes what is against the Law." In a trying moment in His own career, we are told, Prophet Zoroaster avoided a blow from evil doers by chanting aloud the formula: "*Yathâ ahû vairyo*" in their presence.

To the man who is absorbed in worldly and material gains in this life, there is therefore no meaning in Prayer. But for one who is always a seeker after Truth, a searcher for the Higher Being, and a student of fair Nature, for one who strives after being better and better, Prayer is a most potent and wonderful instrument.

The God of the Avesta demands that He should be sincerely sought by all His creatures, that His great doings and wonders in the world should be thoroughly appreciated by them all, and that His living presence in sweet smiling nature should be the truest guide to all mankind towards that Best Light, the Abode of Songs, through the right thinking of good thoughts, the right uttering of good words and the right doing of good deeds. In this genuinely large conception of Prayer there is the truth of truths. Thus a religion, which in remote antiquity taught this interpretation of the term "Prayer" and also referred

to its practical application in life—such a creed should have become a religion for the world, conquering its many nations.

But, as time went on and with it human nature, prayers became stereotyped and merely formal repetitions were made, while the expression of inward thoughts and innermost feelings was ignored. There is always this human tendency of “the easiest way of doing things,” and so it is in this case. How many of the Parsees realise the true meaning of the words that they invariably repeat :

“Haithyâ varshtām hyat  
Vasnâ ferashôtemem,”

that is, “The best desire is the desire of doing righteous deeds”?

### Formality in Prayer

In all our Parsee prayers, *Ātash* or the sacred Fire is given a very high place. Moreover, in *Dokhmās* and in *Aghīāris*, and in Parsee homes fire is not extinguished, and generally a lamp is kept burning. But for that reason we are not to be styled FIRE-WORSHIPPERS. Ours is not Fire-worship or idolatry. Far from it. We emphatically repeat in Song No. 13 thus : “Through the agency of Thy Divine Fire, approach we Thee and Thee alone, O Ahura !” And yet we need to add that as long as the soul is imprisoned by flesh, as long as man is absorbed in matters worldly, such a powerful medium as the Holy Fire burning on the *sanctum sanctorum* in the *Atash-Beherām*, is not only helpful but essential to the people at large. It may be possible, at a higher stage of Man’s development, to dispense with the aid of such visible natural forms as Fire or the symbol of the Sun, and to meditate upon the abstract qualities of Ahura Mazda without stepping into the Temple. One is

undoubtedly capable of feeling the same intense devotion to Him, if one is gifted with a higher and sublimer imagination than other fellow-beings. But such cases are rare, and what is right and proper for one is not necessarily right for every one else. All cannot fully concentrate the mind and silently communicate their thoughts and purposes to the Supreme Father Ormuzd. An attempt therefore at concrete expressions is often desirable, nay, very helpful to the masses. In very few cases can we keep regularity in prayer apart from formality. In written typical forms for certain purposes certain prayers are prescribed by the clergy, while rites and ceremonials are intended more for the body than for the soul, so that men may learn temperance, industry, regularity and purity therefrom.

In the eleventh chapter of the Yasna it is thus recorded :

“Ferâ ve râhî, Ameshâ Spentâ !  
 Yasnemchâ, vohmemchâ, ferâ mananghâ,  
 Ferâ vachanghâ, ferâ shyaothnâ,  
 Ferâ tanvaschit khakhyâô ushtanem.”

“In thoughts, in words and in deeds, I dedicate ceremony and adoration with the very spirit of my body to ye, O Bountiful Immortals !”

A question is then seriously to be raised whether the Parsees should recite their prayers in the original Avesta or in a current language. Turning to some Avesta authority, we note the Ardibahesht Yasht, in which it is stated that the best of all healers in the world is the Manthra-spenta Healer; that is to say, the holy words recited from the sacred Avesta are more effective than any earthly drug or the modern electric healer. It would be, the least to say, well if the wealth of words from the Zend-Avesta were preserved in their pure and original

form, and, without seeking any selfish reward from the Almighty, the Lord be thanked for His many gifts. If it be necessary that the time-honoured and systematic Parsee prayers should be still repeated in the original form, there is no denying the fact that the sense of the same should be simultaneously conveyed in a current tongue. Even a child now puts a straightforward question :

### How, What and When to Pray.

The three fundamental common prayers are Ashem (Song No. 1), Yathâ (Song No. 9) and Yenghe Hâtâm (Song No. 10). Their importance is easily shown by the fact that these short prayers are scattered throughout the Khordeh Avesta. This last is a compilation of various common prayers, which differ from other Avesta Books as, Vendidad or the Law-code, the Yashts and Nyâishes or the glorification Hymns of Archangels and Angels, the Yasna or the seventy-two chapters on Worship, the Visparad or chapters on all the Lords of the Ritual, and the Gâthâs or the Holy Hymns (Yasna chapters 28-34, 43-46, 47-50, 51 and 53). To repeat, then, a passage or chapter from the Vendidad would be to repeat some names of sins, punishments etc., and to recite a Yasht or a Nyâish would be to praise a single spiritual being or an angel, and that too sometimes so highly as to speak of Ahura Mazda praising the Angel Ardivisura! The fact is that all these different prayers were composed by various authors in various ages and so we find a great difference in the subject-matter of these Avesta books. There are people who think that by repeating verses from the Patet Pashemâni they get atonement for sins and secure salvation. But repeating "Patet" means nothing but repeating a long list of sins. The moral might be that by remembering every now and then some horrid sins in this world and knowing the punishments accruing therefrom, we

learn negatively to abstain from them and thus to observe the first-class moral-code of the Pársee Scriptures. But a sincere short prayer would be from the sacred book of the Gáthás, which are full of philosophy and divine revelation (*vide* Songs 3, 6, 8, 9 and 14) and which inspire us if we repeat the same with full understanding, as we may do in our own current language. The Haptan Yasht (Yasna chapters 35—42) forms only the second best fragment in this respect.

There cannot be any hard and fast rule about any particular repetition of a prescribed chapter. According to the philosophy of the Avesta, prayers may be recited at any time and anywhere; but in certain cases, they should be repeated on some occasions according to the sense. For instance, to repeat the Khórshed (Sun) and Meher (Light) Nyáishes by night or the Mahábokhtár (Moon) Nyáish in the Átash-Beherám would be to talk of chalk and cheese. Let us look, again, to the great contrast between Parsee daily prayers and Sunday or Saturday services. Whereas people would like to remember God *at a future leisure hour*, the Zend-Avesta lays an urgent injunction of *daily* prayers upon every Zoroastrian. At the end of a chapter he has to name the particular month, day and Gáh when he is offering his prayers; and yet not only once a day in the morning, but we are told in the Hormuzd Yasht that the true Zoroastrian is to remember Ahura Mazda, and to perform the ceremony of Kushti while rising and sitting, going out and coming in, leaving one's own country or house and entering it, before meals and after meals, by day and by night. To be more particular, an Avesta day is divided into five periods, and prayers beginning each such period are compulsory. These are the five Gáhs of the Khordeh Avesta.

Below are given a few hints on some ordinary prayers, which are recited by laymen, and some ceremonial prayers, which are repeated by Mobads of the present day.

**Common Prayers****I. In the Hávan Gáh (6 A.M. to 12 noon):**

Sarosh Báj, Khorshed and Meher Nyáishes, Namas-kár of the Four Directions, Hávan Gáh and Hormuzd Yasht.

**II. In the Rapithwan Gáh (12 noon to 3 P.M.):**

Sarosh Báj, Khorshed and Meher Nyáishes, Namas-kár and Rapithwan Gáh.

**III. In the Ujiran Gáh (3 to 6 P.M.):**

Sarosh Báj, Khorshed and Meher Nyáishes, Namas-kár and Ujiran Gáh.

**IV. In the Aiwisruthrem Gáh (6 to 12 P.M.):**

Sarosh Báj, Aiwisruthrem Gáh, Sarosh Yasht and Patet Pashemáni.

**V. One Ashem Vohu before going to bed at night and one after leaving the bed in the morning.****VI. In the Ushahen Gáh (12 P.M. to 6 A.M.):**

Sarosh Báj, Ushahen Gáh, Hormuzd or Ardibahesht Yasht, Sarosh Yasht and Hoshbām.

**VII. In the Átash-Beherám :**

Prayers of the Five Gáhs, Átash Nyáish and Ardibahesht, Behráam or Sarosh Yasht.

**VIII. \*During Farvardégán Days :**

Last five days of the year (from Roj Ástád to Ánerán):

Prayers of the Five Gáhs and the Chapter of Frá-mraot.

Five Gáthâ days :

The five Gáthâs, Ahunavad, Ushtavad, Spentomad Vohukshathra and Vahishtoyasht, one on each day in order.

The last day of the year, viz., the Vahishtoyasht<sup>\*</sup> Gáthâ Day (wrongly called the Naoroz Day and properly speaking the Pateti Day or the day of repentance).

Patet Pashemáni.

*New Year's Day :*

Prayers of the Five Gáhs, Hormuzd Yasht, Avesta Patet and *Razishtayâd chistayâd* (vide Song No. 20).

#### IX. *Near the Tower of Silence :*

The Chapter of Satum, Farvardin Yasht, Patet Ravânni and Namaskâr of Dokhma.

#### X. *Near the Dead Body :*

Patet Ravânni, and Sarosh Yasht.

*Note.*—Before reciting any of these Prayers the KUSHTI CEREMONY is performed, that is, the Sacred Thread is tied round the waist over the White Garment (Sudreh) with the recitation of Ahuramazda Khodâe, two Yathâs, and one Ashem.

### Ceremonial Prayers

- I. *Gehsârna Ceremony* and prayers recited before the dead body is taken to the Tower of Silence.

Sagdid No. 1. (showing the dead body to the Dog).

Bâj of Sarosh (incomplete Kemná Mazdá upto *gashâd astvaitish ashake*).

Gáthá Ahunavaiti (Yasna Chapter 27th onwards)  
up to Chapter 31st verse 4th.

Sagdid No. 2.

(The Raván here placed on the iron bier).

Chapter 31st continued after verse 5th up to the end  
of the Ahunvad Gáthá.

Then Báj of Sarosh concluded from *nemascha yá  
ármaish izáchá*.

Sagdid No. 3.

## II. *Uthamná Ceremony*: (3rd Day).

In the Ujiran or Ushahen Gáh of the third day after  
death.

Khorshed and Meher Nyáishes (twice), Sarosh  
Yasht Hádokht, i.e., Sarosh Yasht together with  
the three extant Fargards of the old Hádokht  
Nask, Patet Ravánni, the Pázend Nirang in the  
Chapter on Satum called Dhup Sárna, *Sósh* and  
Tan Darosti.

## III. *Cháhrum Ceremony*: (4th Day).

Ushahen Gáh, Sarosh Yasht Hádokht (Pázend  
Nirang) and the ceremony of Afargán of Daham  
Yazad.

Báj of Ardá Farvash and Sarosh Afargán and  
Yazishn of Ardá Farvash.

[Ceremony in the Aghiári for the first 3 days:

Yazishn of Sarosh: recitation of the 72 Chapters of  
the Yasna with the Khsnuman of Sarosh.



Ceremony in the Aghiári on the 4th day :

Báj of the Four Yazads, viz., Rashne, Ástad, Mino Rám, Sarosh and Ardá Farvash.]

IV. *Afargán Ceremony* (performed on the anniversary days, Rojgárs and Jashan days) :

Pázend Nirang (Dhup Sárna).

Names of the Dead repeated—(*vide* Song No. 22).

In the case of the Afargán of Ardá Farvash 8 Yathás and 3 Ashems with the Kshnuman of Ardá Farvash; and in the case of others accordingly.

Lastly, *by some* the chapter on *Táo ahmi nmáne* (*vide* Songs No. 29 and The Common Prayer, lines 133—148).

V. *Báj ceremony* (as performed in the Aghiári) :

Certain Hás from the beginning of the Yasna with the recitation of the Pázend Nirang at intervals.

In the ceremonial, the water, vegetable and animal kingdoms are represented by a tumbler of water, flowers and ghee or butter respectively, with sandal wood and incense burning.

VI. *Satum ceremony* (wrongly called Astam) :

The chapter on Satum (*i.e.*, Yasna Ch. 26) with the Pázend Nirang (in silence).

Names of the Great dead are repeated. (*Vide* Song No. 22).

VII. *Nirangdin ceremony* (for the Preparation of *Nirang*) :

Two Mobads take 9 nights' Barshnum.

Khúb Yazishn by an outside Mobad.

For 6 days after that, they recite alternately the 72 chapters of the Yasna each day. (Gevráh).

Then the Nirang of the Varasia (*i.e.*, the White Bull) prepared.

On the 7th day after the recitation of the Yasna chapters, at 12 o'clock in the night, the ceremony is commenced, with the pot of the Nirang on one side of the Sacred Stage and the pot of the sacred water on the other.

All the chapters of the Yasna, the Visparad and the Vendidad are recited, till the dawn of the next day.

Six white pebbles are thrown while reciting the 19th Fargard and 200 Yathás, into the two pots of Nirang and water.

*Note.*—The Nirang thus prepared is marvellously preserved for many years.

### VIII. *Jashan Ceremony* :

Generally the day, of the same name as the month, is the Jashan day, *e.g.*, the day Ardibahesht of the month Ardibahesht in the second month of the year.

#### Important Jashan Festivals :

##### 1. *Seasonal* :

Gahambárs: Maidhyozarem (Mid-Spring), Maidhyoshahem (Mid-Summer), Paitishahem (Harvest time), Ayáthrem (Autumn), Maidhyárem (Mid-Winter), and Hamaspathmaedem (Equinox).

2. *Farvardegán holidays :*

10 Days at the end of the Parsee Year.

Farvardin Month and Farvardin Rój.

3. *Historical :*

- i. Jamshedi Naoroz (Vernal Equinox) 21st March, fixed by King Jamshed and observed universally by nations of Central Asia.
- ii. Meharangán (Autumnal Equinox), King Faridun vanquished Zohák the Tyrant. Meher Month and Meher Rój.
- iii. Tirangán. End of the War between Minocher and Afrásiáb. Tir Month and Tir Rój.
- iv. Khordád Sál (Birthday of Prophet Zoroaster), Farvardin Month and Khordád Rój.
- v. Zarthosti Disá (Anniversary Day of Zoroaster) Dae Month and Khorshed Rój.

*Prayers :*

The same prayers are recited as in Afargán mentioned above *with* the Kshnuman of the particular Angel or Archangel of that day, *e g.*, Khordád Sál Jashan : Ceremonies and prayers of the Afargan with the Kshnuman of the Khordád Amsháspand.

IX. *Farokshi :*

Recitation of the Chapter on Satum with the Pázend Nirang and the Farvardin Yasht.

X. *Sarosh and Vendidad :*

Recitation of the Chapters of the Yasna with the Kshnuman of Sarosh in the case of Sarosh ; and the Yasna, Visparad and Vendidad Chapters in the case of the Vendidad Ceremony.

**XI. *Naojot or Initiation Ceremony :***

Age limit between 7 and 14.

Ceremony to be performed at home or in the Agbiári.

At first Nân (Suân) or sacred bath is given to the child. Bâj taking and repetition of Chapters "Kshnaothra Ahurahe Mazdâô," "Kem nâ Mazdâ," and "Jasa mé avanghe Mazda." The child is given pomegranate leaves and Nirang. Then "Ba nám-e Khudâ bakshâyandeh" is completed. Recitation of "Ahmâi raescha," "Hazanghrem," "Jasa mé avanghe Mazda," and "Kerfeh Môzd." The priest and the child together repeat the Patet. (Sometimes only Ahunavars are repeated by the latter). The White Garment (Sudreh) is then put in the right hand and the Confirmation Formula (Razistayâô chistayâô) recited.

The child gives a guarantee to remain faithful to the Religion for life.

With the words "Kshayaothnanâm" in "Yathâ ahu vairyô" the Sudreh is put on.

The Priest recites the Hormuzd Yasht up to "Peresat Zarathushtrô Ahurem Mazdâm."

The Kushti is then tied round the waist with "Ahura Mazda Khôdâe" formula.

Hoshibâm and "Tan darosti" conclude the function.

**XII. *Návar or First Examination for Priesthood :***

Age limit 12 to 15.

A priest's son must know the following :

Yasna, Visparad, Sirojá, Bâj and Afargân prayers.

**Ceremony proper :**

For his own *tan pāk*: Nân or Sacred Bath is given in the place called Barshnûm Gâh. For 9 days and nights the candidate lives aloof, reciting the compulsory prayers in the five Gâhs, eating with a spoon and drinking water once a day, and preserving purity in everything.

*Note.*—Water and food are not allowed to be touched by the hand during this period.

After a short rest, another 9 nights' *Barshnûm* is given, for the person for whom he is undergoing the Nâvar ceremony. On the 10th day he is brought home.

Next follows Gevrâ Yazishn of Minô Nâvar by 2 other Mobads. Five days' segregation. On the 6th day in the presence of the Anjuman (congregation) he is taken to the Aghiâri where the Bâj is taken.

1st day, Yasna of Mino Nâvar, Afarghân and Bâj of Nâvar.

2nd day, Yasna of Sarosh, Afarghân and Bâj of Sarosh.

3rd day, Yasna of Siroja, Afarghân and Bâj of Siroja.

4th day, Visparad, Afarghân and Bâj of Dâdâr Ormuzd.

**XIII. *Marâtab* or Second Examination for Priesthood :**

Candidate must learn all chapters of the Vendidad and the Visparad.

Ceremony proper: similar to that in the case of Nâvar.

Nine nights' Barshnûm.

On the tenth day he is brought home.

In the early morning of the eleventh day he is taken to the Aghiári.

On the Hidhorâ (Stone Stage) standing he commences the Yasna with the Kshnuman of Minô Nâvar and again with that of Sarosh.

Then a Bâj with the Kshnuman of Sarosh is taken (repetition of Yasna chapters 3 to 8).

In the afternoon in Ujiran Gâh another Bâj.\*

At 12 midnight chapters of the Vendidad and the Visparad are repeated. After the Homa juice is poured into the well, the Marâtab is allowed to return home in the morning.

*Note.*—No priest is allowed to minister to the religious functions in any Parsee family, unless he is passed both as a Nâvar and as a Marâtab

#### XIV. Marriage Ceremony.

Ceremony commences *after sunset*. Nân (Sacred Bath) is given to the marrying couple. The bride and the bridegroom are seated on a stage. Two priests reciting "Yathâ ahu vairyo" encircle the thrones with cotton (Symbol of Marriage-tie). Âshirvâd in Pahlavi (Âshirvâd Paemân-ê Pahlavi) is commenced with "*Dehâd tâ Dâdâr Hôrmuzd, farhest farzandân nar a navirangân, farâkh roji o dosti del rôbâ tan aj cheher ravâ derjivashn o pândi sad panjâh sâl.....*"

The day, month, year and place where the ceremony is performed are named there.

The Sanskrit translation of the *Ashirvad* (translated by Neryôsang Dhaval for the king of Sanjân) is also here repeated. Lastly *Ashirvâd Tan Darosti*.

The most important part of the ceremony is the taking of consent both from the bride and the bridegroom. If the bride is married for the first time, the word "Kanik" (virgin) is used; if second time "Zan" (woman).

Two witnesses have also to sign the marriage contract.

*Note.*—This same marriage ceremony is by some gone through also in the *Ushahen Gâh* (after 12 midnight) of the same day.

## XV. *Dokhma or the Tower of Silence:*

### i.—*Tând or Foundation Ceremony:*

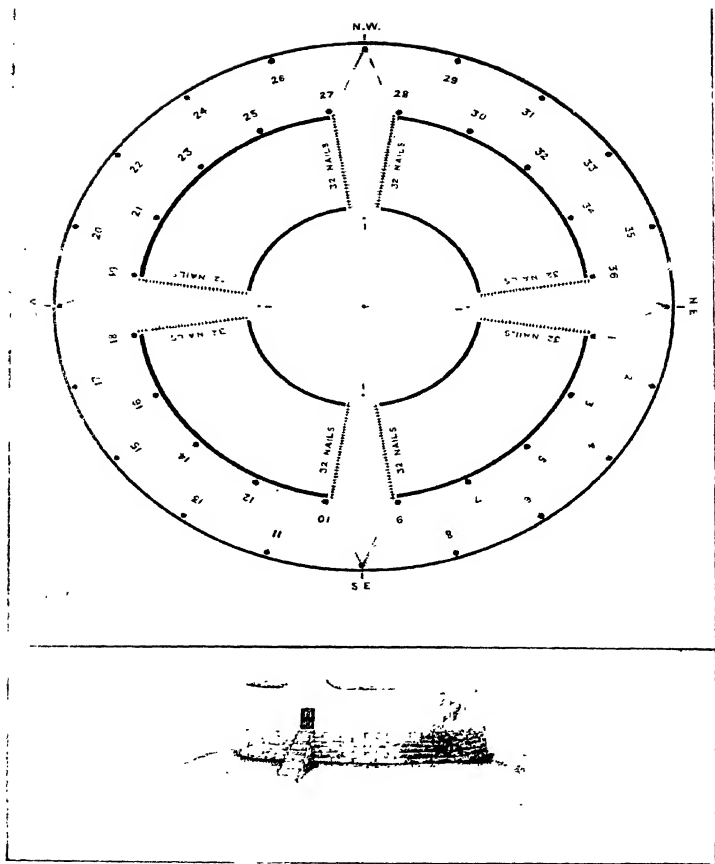
*First Stage*—On the proposed site one Mobad performs Bâj ceremonies in honour of:—1, Sarosh; 2, Dâdâr Ormuzd; 3, Bahman Amshâspand; 4, Ardibahest; 5, Sheherevar; 6, Aspadâd; 7, Khordâd and 8, Amardâd.

He then recites Sarosh Bâj upto *Ashahe* and repeating *Ahunavars* (11 to 21) digs a hollow. Then continuing from *Sarosh asho*, 2 *Yathâs*, "*Ahmâi raescha*" and "*Kerfeh Môzd*" (in silence) are completed. Bâj and *Afargân* next if desired.

*Second Stage.*—A circular foundation of about 300 feet in circumference and 3½ Gajas deep is dug.







**UPPER: Ground plan of the Tana or foundation of a Dokhma (Tower of Silence), showing the positions of 301 nails with strings**

**LOWER: A distant view of the Tower**

A cotton string of 101 white threads is prepared, washed thrice and dried.

301 iron nails of various sizes are procured.

Description of 301 nails:—

- |     |       |                  |  |
|-----|-------|------------------|--|
| 1   | nail  | weighing 1 maund | with no holes, for the centre.   |
| 4   | nails | 2 maunds         | with three holes, for the four corners, N.-E., N.-W., S.-E., S.-W.             |
| 36  | "     | 1 maund:         | with no holes, 9 for each side E., W., N., S.                                  |
| 256 | "     | "                | " " " for four double rows of 32 nails each, at right angles from the corners. |
| 4   | "     | "                | " " " one between the two rows of 32 around the Bhandâr (Central Well).        |

Now the Priest drives these 301 nails, with one *Yathâ* for each, in 301 places, starting from the centre, then N.-E. and so on, as shown in the picture.

*Third Stage.*—The cotton string is next tied round (Tânâ proper) in a *definite order*, starting from the N.-E. nail and ending with the central one.

Afterwards this foundation is covered up with earth and the building is erected.

## ii.—*Opening Ceremony* :

The entire building is washed clean three times.

Three days' consecration ceremony :

In the Bhandâr (central well) two priests do the Yazishn ceremony in Hâvan Gâh for three consecutive days, in honour of the angel Sraosha, who guards the souls of the dead.

Fourth day :

The Yasna in honour of Dádár Ormuzd. The Bâj and Afargân in honour of (1) Ormuzd, (2) Aspadâd, (3) Sarosh, (4) Ardafarvash.

Outside the Tower :

Jashan and Afargân in honour of Dádár Ormuzd, Aspadâd Amshâspand, Ardafarvash, Dahmân and Sarosh.

Lastly *Tan darosti* in the name of the founder of the Dokhma.

*Note.*—This ceremony of the Dokhma, is a very long and interesting function and thousands of faithful Zoroastrians from far-off places attend it personally and do charity besides, according to their means.

## XVI. *Installation of Âtash-Beherâm*:

Fire is at first procured from various sources, purified by a certain process of purification and then installed in the new Âtash-Beherâm.

The following are points for the purification process of 16 varieties of Fire, which are essential:—

Fire 1:—From the Cremation.

*First Stage.*—Two Behedins, after doing the Kushti ceremony and reciting the Sarôsh Bâj upto *ashahe*, hold a Chamach (Fire-holder), having a hole in the centre, with sandal-wood powder in it, at a distance of about half a Gaj, over the flames of a burning human body. The flames are not allowed to touch it. When the powder is lighted by the heat of these flames, its fire is brought to a dry place in the open air. In the direction of the wind, in a line, 91 heaps of sandal-wood powder are made, about half a Gaj apart from each other. The heat of the original is made to ignite the first heap, which in its turn ignites the second and so on, till the 91st begins to burn.

*Second Stage.*—Then two Mobads dig out 91 small hollows in the ground in a line and fill them with sandal-wood powder. Holding a Chamach, as in the first case, over the flame of the 91st heap, and repeating the process of igniting one heap after another, the last 91st hollow is filled with its own fire. This last is afterwards put in an Afargâniâ (Fire-container) and taken to the Dar-e-Meher.

*Third Stage*—Taking some of this last fire, on the first day the priests perform one Yasna and one Vendidad ceremony in honour of Dâdâr Ormuzd. This consecrated portion is set apart. The next day some more is taken from the

original stock and the same ceremony is gone through. Here the second is mixed with the first consecrated portion. In like manner 91 Yasna and 91 Vendidad ceremonies are performed on this Fire of the first kind, which is kept burning in a separate chamber, till others are ready. No outside lamp or light is allowed to be brought near it.

**Fire 2:—From the Dyer's Furnace.**

The process of consecration is similar to that in Fire 1, but in this case 80 heaps of fire are ignited and 80 Yasna and Vendidad ceremonies are gone through in honour of Bahman Amsháspand, before this Fire is set apart in another chamber.

**Fire 3:—From the King's or Hâkem's Kitchen-room.**

In this case, 70 times the flames are transferred from one heap to another and 70 Yasna ceremonies and 70 Vendidad in honour of Ardibahesht are done.

**Fire 4:—From the Potter's Kiln.**

61 operations and 61 Yasna-Vendidads in honour of Sheherevar Amshaspad are performed.

**Fire 5:—From the Brick-maker's Kiln.**

For the purification of this, 75 times the fire is transferred and 75 ceremonies in honour of Aspadâd Amsháspand are done.

**Fire 6:—From the Fakir's Hearth.**

50 operations with 50 Yasna-Vendidads in honour of Khordâd Amsháspand.

**Fire 7:—**From the Goldsmith's or Alchemist's shop.

60 operations and 60 Yasna and 60 Vendidad ceremonies in honour of Amardâd Amshâspand.

**Fire 8:—**From the Mint.

55 operations with 55 Yasna-Vendidad ceremonies in honour of De-pa-Âdar.

**Fire 9:—**From the Blacksmith's Furnace.

61 operations and 61 Yasna-Vendidads in honour of Âdar Yazad.

**Fire 10:—**From the Ammunition Factory.

61 operations and 61 Yasna-Vendidads in honour of Âvân Yazad.

**Fire 11:—**From the Bakery.

61 operations and 61 Yasna-Vendidads in honour of Khôrshed.

**Fire 12:—**From the Distillery.

61 operations and 61 Yasna-Vendidads in honour of Môhór.

**Fire 13:—**From the Battlefield.

35 operations and 35 Yasna-Vendidads in honour of Tir.

**Fire 14:—**From the Shepherd's Hut.

35 operations, and 35 Yasna 35 Vendidad ceremonies in the name of Gôsh Yazad.

**Fire 15:—From the Lightning.**

This fire is with difficulty procured from jungles or hill-tops where the lightning may ignite a dry log, etc.

90 operations are to be performed here with 90 Yasna-Vendidâd ceremonies in honour of De-pa-Meher.

**Fire 16:—From the Mobad's or Behedin's House.**

In the beginning 40 operations in the case of this fire from the Mobad's or Behedin's house are made. This is afterwards mixed with some fire from a flint-stone and dry wood, which is purified 144 times. Altogether 184 Yasna-Vendidâd ceremonies in honour of Meher are gone through.

When all these 16 Fires are ready, they are then mixed in a big Afargâniâ in the same order in which they are prepared. For three days more the Yasna and the Vendidâd functions are continued. Meanwhile the new building, in which the Sacred Fire is to be installed, especially the dome, is washed clean and consecrated with 3 Yasnas and 3 Vendidâds.

Then for 30 more days the prayers are continued.

On the Day of Installation one Yasna in honour of Sarosh is done, and the Fire is for the first time installed on the marble Altar.

Last comes the Jashan, in which 3 Afargân ceremonies for Sarosh, Dahman and Sarosh (again) are done.

[In the case of the Aghiâri or Dar-e-Meher, only four kinds of Fire from the houses of (1) a priest (2) a warrior (3) an agriculturist and (4) a workman are required.]

*Note.*—Thus is completed the most elaborate, the most expensive, and the longest of all ceremonials enjoined by the Zoroastrian Religion. The central idea seems to be the preparation of a sample of the purest Fire compounded of materials from various sources, by means of this systematic method of purification by heat. Through this and other similar religious ceremonials Zoroastrianism inculcates but one virtue and that is PURITY. This, the Fire ceremonial, forms the best practical means of teaching how to purify and reclaim substances from their impure conditions and to preserve them for ever. No pains are, however, spared in this kind of consecration work, and the whole takes more than one year. For the various lengthy operations hundreds of Mobads are employed, whose sole object is to distil over the purest compound from different raw materials.

Altogether there are eight Átash-Beherâms in India to-day, of which the most important is the one at Udvádá, the Benâres of the Parsees.



# The Parsee Calendar of 365 days

[12 months of 30 days each + 5 Gáthá Days]

DAYS	MONTHS											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Farvardin.	Ardibahesht	Khordád.	Tir.	Amardád.	Shaherevar	Meher.	Avan.	Adar.	Dae.	Bahman.	Aspandád.
<b>Ormuzd</b> ...	1											
<b>Behman</b> ...	2											
<b>Ardibahesht</b> ...	3											
<b>Sheherevar</b> ...	4											
<b>Aspandád</b> ...	5											
<b>Khordád</b> ...	6											
<b>Amardád</b> ...	7											
<b>Depadar</b> ...	8											
<b>Adar</b> ...	9											
<b>Aván</b> ...	10											
<b>Khorshed</b> ...	11											
<b>Mohor</b> ...	12											
<b>Tir</b> ...	13											
<b>Gosh</b> ...	14											
<b>Depameher</b> ..	15											
<b>Meher</b> ..	16											
<b>Sarosh</b> ...	17											
<b>Rashne</b> ...	18											
<b>Farvardin</b> ...	19											
<b>Beherám</b> ...	20											
<b>Rám</b> ...	21											
<b>Govád</b> ...	22											
<b>Depadin</b> ...	23											
<b>Din</b> ...	24											
<b>Arashishvang</b> ...	25											
<b>Astád</b> ...	26											
<b>Ásmán</b> ...	27											
<b>Jamyád</b> ...	28											
<b>Márespand</b> ...	29											
<b>Anerán</b> ...	30											

## Gáthá Days.

1. Ahunavad.
2. Ustavád.
3. Spentomad.
4. Vohukshathra.
5. Vahishtoyasht.

BOOK 4

A PICTURE OF  
ZARATHUSHTRA FROM  
THE GATHAS



# A Picture of Zarathushtra from the Gathas.

**T**HERE was, in the days of Gustâsp, the Kyánian king of great glory, a certain star in the name of Zarathushtra making his appearance on the eastern horizon, so that the earth was wrapped up in a luminous garb. The story of this great Leader of ancient Persia is recorded in brief but telling strophes in the Book of the Gáthás, the hymns which have the print in them of the Prophet's own utterances and teachings. It would be therefore vain to argue that a picture of His life cannot be drawn from the Book. Those who have carefully gone through these holy songs, especially the Ushtavaiti Gáthá, cannot fail to reproduce a sufficiently accurate account of what Zoroaster said and did in His day

## A Powerful Personality

To many a youthful mind, to talk in the present age about things old by centuries appears out of order and uncommon. But the Law of Evolution clears all such vague notions and definitely states that upon the Past is built our Present, and our future is to be raised on what is now accomplished by humanity at large. Experience shows that ideas, so to speak, float in the air, as they emanate from active brains and, as the world moves on, get themselves ultimately crystallised around "the nucleus of some powerful soul." The Prophet of Irán was such a powerful Personality, that round about Him gathered the royalty and nobility, the very life of the land, although at the threshold of His precious career He had to undergo hard trials. But in hardships and in sufferance He found happiness, and good, He knew, was at the bottom of all honest endeavours.

Page after page of the Prophet's own "thumb-nail sketch" stands out in bold relief to shed the lustre of His few words and fewer Laws, framed not for one age and one generation but for many, that have already gone by, and more that are to come hereafter.

### The Call of Zoroaster

In time out of mind, when the world was in its infancy a message is sent by the *Geush Urvâ* or "Kine's Soul" to *Ahura Mazda*, when the climax was reached and when people began to experience the shock of murders and the contemptuous defiance of evil doers. In agony the query was then put to the Lord "Who made me? For what didst Thou form me? With uplifted hands I beseech Thee, *Ahura*, let not the faithful be destroyed along with the faithless."

The great Being, *Mazda*, "throned highest above all heights," thus responds and saves mankind :

"Found for me here is the man  
Who alone to our doctrines hath hearkened,  
*Zarathushtra Spitama* ;  
Our sacred counsels (*Asha's* and *Mazda's*).  
Forth to proclaim He desires ;  
*Him* the place of my Prophet give I !"

Gáthá XXIX (*Mills*).

To this Zoroaster thus replies :

"O Righteousness and thou Good Mind,  
With surpassing chants I'll praise you,  
And *Mazda*, for whom our Piety  
Aids the everlasting Kingdom ;  
Aye, together I adore you ;  
Then for grace while I draw near."

Gáthá XXVIII (*Mills*).

Thus is appointed Zarathushtra the prophet of Persia, holding in His hand the Sacred and far reaching light of Good Mind and Zealous Devotion. In the fulness of His faith and hopes He takes the charge of His office. The bright morning of Khordâd Sâl sees Zoroaster born, the good struggle starts, the deed of duty begins.

### Historical Personage

Born in the noble Aryan home some thousands of years ago, Zoroaster, who is Byron's Sage and Shelley's Magus, cannot be denied as a historical personage, so that His teachings, preserved in a pure form in the Gáthás, are all facts and no fiction. From the Gáthás themselves we have the first-hand evidence of His historical character, for His verses breathe out with eagerness the offering of the *vital force* of the body and the soul in service of His fellow-creatures.

### His Initiation

In the dawn of His coming, we have his Initiation together with a prayer for Light and Inspiration, before the performance of His Sacred duties—duties towards Himself, towards Ahura the Lord and towards His good creatures. Thus He sings :

“ With hands outstretched I beseech,  
With praise for this Grace, the first blessing,  
All actions done in the Right,  
Gift of, Mazda, thy bounteous spirit,  
And the Good Mind's understanding.”

Gáthás XXVIII (*Mills*).

### Entering upon the Office

With this “priestly prayer,” Zoroaster begins His noble mission in our world, but with all the sufferings common to all

mankind, He meets with troubles and difficulties when He exclaims, "Which course should I then take?" and when his kinsmen, allies and others forsake Him in His hour of trial and He cannot see which turning He should take; nor do the rulers of the land befriend Him. The question as to how then He should please the Lord stands before him. In such trying moments with few followers and fewer friends He wanders here and there in search of Truth. Above all He only prays for the riches of Good Mind from the Lord.

Thus with scanty support and with the burden of duty on Himself but with "Heart within and Ahura overhead," He sails onward in His quest. To avoid the results of animosity, He for a while retires to heights and caves and passes His time there in contemplation. Suddenly He becomes an inspired being, and a bright idea flashes into his mind. The river issuing from the majestic heights loves always to work its weedy way soon and flow down the ghats, and straining and struggling through valleys and over plains ultimately seeks its eternal shelter in the bosom of the ocean. So does this messenger of Ahura Mazda resolve upon descending to the *busy* world and fighting His fight face to face. After sundry troubles He becomes the champion of

### **the Great Crusade**

Against those, who have the elements of Daevayasnm in them. The Darvands and other evil-doers, together with the foul Turanian rulers, raise the standard of rebellion against this holy Prophet and desire to pave the road for the faithless and the wicked. With hopes of success, and with the aid of Sraosha the Divine Instructor, Vohu Manô the Life Adorner and Asha His Battle-axe, He fights the holy fight. In all His doings hope like a gleaming taper constantly cheers His way, till He wins the day.

### Victory

is towards His side and in thanksgiving He sings :—

“These, Lord, Thou’lt give and through that spirit  
bounteous,  
 By Fire for good to strivers twain ’gainst wrong  
 Through growth of zeal and Truth, O Mazda !  
 For zeal instructeth her beseeching throng.”  
Gáthá XLVII (*Mills*).

### A Conference

Then He holds a public meeting and delivers a stirring address before the assembled masses, who “come from near and from far.” Questions are put to Him by the great Dasturs of the day, and they ask the Messenger to give them an explanation of the existence of “Good and Evil” in the world. Zoroaster clearly understood how the evil doers were fighting against His good cause; He grasped the great Law of two quite opposite spirits, Spenta and Angra, so that with the help of this principle, He gives the congregation a thorough understanding, in a philosophical way, of the groundless cause of Daeva-worshippers and appeals to them to work always against the cause of Angra Mainyu. The eternal law, “Ill to the Evil, pure blessings to the Good,” He sees in his vision engraved on the gates of Paradise, shining out in splendour and triumph and promising the struggling Souls in the world their rewards in accordance *only* with Ahura’s just wisdom in the Creation’s end.

### His first Disciples

King Gustásp, the Constantine of the Avesta, is then easily won over and with him come also Hæchataspæ, Frashostra, Hvogva, Jámáspa and others. The word of Ahura is for the



first time taught to these His Disciples and in the open assembly the Great Being Ahuramazda is worshipped as the only Deity of the Iranian race henceforth, and when Zoroaster teaches them to preserve purity in daily life, they begin clearly to understand the deep philosophy of the purifying Fire, the "puthra" of Ahura.

### His Soliloquy and Study of Nature

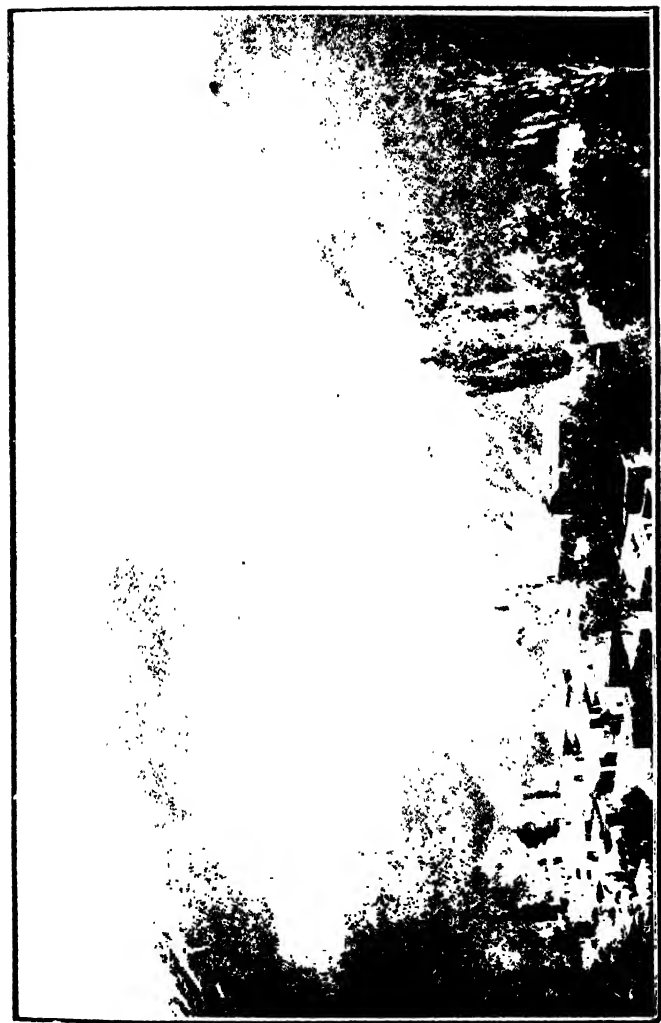
Now comes the period of repose in state-affairs and activity in theology and in His soliloquy He puts a series of questions to Lord Ahura, about His mysterious workings in Nature. He learns laws and great truths by setting to Himself definite queries. He learns truths and great secrets while wandering on the heights and by the sides of the Damávand mountain; truths from the clouds that travel fast in the sky, from the Fire that remains permanently burning in the Sacred Chamber, from the Suns and stars that move from place to place and seem revolving, from the Moon that waxes and wanes month by month. At the bottom of all these activities, of course, He had the powerful presence of His God. In this temple of solitude He thus passes some time and penetrates deep into the marvels of nature, which knowledge is to stand Him in good stead later on. Among His many musings here, we find the following as typical:—

This I ask Thee, aright Ahura tell me :

Who ever earth and sky from falling guardeth ?  
 Who hath save Thee brought forth rivers and forests ?  
 Who with the wind hath yoked racers to storm clouds ?  
 Who of the Good Mind's grace ever was source ?

Gáthá XLIV (*Mills*).

Through similar lessons of His own He makes Himself fully acquainted with Nature's laws, and ponders deeply over such



Mount Uamavand—a scene of inspiration and place of retirement of the Prophet



questions till Divine Revelation shines in Him and He is enabled to gradually spread His Faith and convert the *intelligent* followers of the then known world to Mazdayasnism.

His surroundings play a prominent part in the formation of His cherished beliefs, for example, His extreme reverence for Fire as the holy and health-giving element among Nature's useful creations. "The crest of Mt. Alburz gilded with God's eternal sunshine—for Alburz is a holy mountain in the Avesta—may have suggested the theme of more than one inspired discourse. The well-springs of the blazing oil and phenomena of volcanic regions of Iran may have seemed to Him a symbol of the source of the Fire Divine."

### His only Sermon

In this He promises all faithful adherents to His doctrines the Desirable Realm, the rewards and gifts from Ahura Mazda, the health of Salvation, lasting strength for the Soul for upholding the cause of the Right and above all the Good Mind's life. What more can a mortal being desire than this sure promise:—

"Yes, that *summum bonum* may He gain surer,  
Who hath for us straight paths of grace explored,  
Of this life bodily the use, of that the mental,  
In the eternal realms, where Ahura dwells,  
Like Thee, noble and august, O Mazda Lord!"

Gáthá XLIV (*Mula*).

Here the Prophet gives His faithful followers authentic hopes of securing the desired reward fixed on account of mercy and justice. In short, He becomes for them all their Lord, both temporal and spiritual.

Properly speaking, it is as

### **A Religious Reformer**

that Zarathushtra first began His career in this World. Having full power on the dark land to lighten it and power also on the dead world to make it live, He came

All eyes, all ears for nobler life to open,  
All hearts, all minds to illumine, to enlighten.

So that a great religious Reformation came after Him and in His arduous attempts to fight the fight and win the glory, He always had

### **His watchword**

the great weapon of Asha or righteousness :—

Righteousness is good,  
Righteousness is best ;  
'Tis happiness to him  
Who's the purest of pure.

“With the best Righteousness and the highest, O Mazda,” as He said elsewhere, “We behold Thee, we approach Thee and Thy kingship for ever !”

Another law that He came to teach mankind is the doctrine of the purity of mind and body, whereby it is rightly expounded how the mind depends upon the body and the body upon the mind, with the simple *theory of right thinking*.

There is no other form of divinity which preaches a doctrine equivalent to the one so rightly embodied in the simple phrase :

### Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds.

The morality of people is prominent in these three human functions of thinking, uttering and doing *only right*, these three which bring salvation's health home to him whosoever he may be. His faith has the extreme merit of standing upon these splendid supports and principles which even a child could see and comprehend. The love for truth is recognised by all, and to speak the truth is the most important ethical principle taught by

### This great Moral Teacher.

A good thought in the beginning produces a vital effect on all our actions. The deeds we do, the words we say, have the germs in them of the first thought at the outset. It does seem as though the whole body of Zoroaster's teachings form a first-class moral code, condensed in the simple law of purity.

### A Practical Reformer

The prophet preached and practised to the very letter of His law all the principles which He came to present to the Iranian nation. "Renounce the good religion of Mazda," Ahriman tempts Him, "and the whole world shall be Thine." But His is this straight-forward answer: "Never shall I forsake the good religion of Mazda, never till even my bones, my soul, my brain should fall asunder." This He was enabled to say, for His faith in the Lord was unflinching and His trust was in Him alone. "We have," says Professor Jackson of Columbia, "*in His own words*, evidence enough of a prevailing density of superstition and of a mist of religious unbelief that hung like a pall over the benighted people. Messiah-like He appears and the land of Iran rings with His clarion *note of reform*. He is born as one out of the fulness of time. He arises to revolutionise the religious thought of Iran, to stir the soul of Media and Bactria

*and to form for the coming nation of Persia a creed, which is to boast a Cyrus 'the shepherd of the Lord,' and a Darius who shall give command for rebuilding the temple of Jerusalem."*

One very urgent message that the Messenger has brought for us, one which has changed the destiny of mankind is

### **The Doctrine of Dualism**

of the two quite opposite spirits, viz., Spenta Mainyu and Angra Mainyu the two primæval spirits forming an everlasting pair, the better and the worse. The wise and the holy He invariably taught to choose between the two. For the unwise and the unholy He had nothing but misery and woe.

This powerful principle of Good and Evil pervades, in fact, all the wide world. In science as well as in social matters, in matter as well in spirit, in light and darkness, in rich and poor, in high and low alike this unique Law is to work for ever. The most serious question of anomalies of life—imperfectly solved by various schools of philosophy—was in those prehistoric days solved by

### **This Spiritual Leader**

when the question was put to Him by the learned of the land: "How are the imperfections discoverable in the world, the various kinds of evils, wickedness and baseness, compatible with the goodness, holiness and justice of God?" Here is the philosophical explanation given by the Master, whereby He taught that there is "Some soul of goodness in things evil."

The ruin and destruction created by fire, floods, famine and other evils are nothing compared with the good wrought on the whole by them. Dark spots there are in the bright luminary of the Solar system, thorns there are set over against beautiful

roses, and terrible storms follow wonderful calms. Yet it is not the spots but the photosphere, not the thorns but the roses, not the storms but the calms that are victorious in the end. Nature keeps the good element in all objects always in the ascendant and hence the ultimate coming of the Kingdom of Ahura by virtue of the Righteous Order. Of life itself He has taken a cheerful view. Under the influence of His optimistic spirit, while denouncing all evil souls and encouraging depressed but righteous people sunk in sorrow, He too could sing thus :

“Sorrow is the night of man ;  
 In grief alone to him is given  
 With intellectual eye to scan  
 The glorious mysteries of heaven.  
 Joy’s rich sunshine gives to view  
 One wide arch of heavenly blue,  
 But as when night with darkling hand  
 Draws his grey curtain o’er the land,  
 Each of heaven’s shining host  
 Appears at his appointed post ;  
 So when Sorrow’s night comes o’er us,  
 Starry visions rise before us,  
 A mighty firmament of thought  
 Opens upon us all unsought.”

In a word, it is the Master’s

### Great Mission in Our World

to teach mankind the principle of embracing good and hating evil, and in the end to give success to the Lord Ahura, doing the duty in patient but cheerful assurance that Good shall come.

“ At last, far off, at last, to all ;  
 And every winter change to spring.”



But the mightiest message that Spitman Zarathushtra has brought for the world, the greatest event that He has prophesied for us is

### His Message

about the Creation's Final End. The golden Word that one gets from the Zend-Avesta, and the sweetest sound that it gives to the ears of an enthusiastic student of the Book is FRASHO-KERETI. This theory of the Frasho-Kereti aims at a good state of all affairs in the end, and supports the modern scientific theory of PROGRESS, that after an initial low state, with the advance of time there is progress and ultimate elevation of things. The World may die, the universal power of Gravitation may cease to work, the whole race of human beings, the descendants of Mashya and Mashyái may perish, but Ristákhez shall shine above them all, and the sweetest scent from that Best Existence (Paradise) shall spread itself throughout the length and breadth of the Universe. We may shudder at the very thought of death and the condition of the Soul thereafter, but we shall not feel nervous at the coming of the Day of Resurrection and Eternal Justice, when

The World shall rise once more  
The dead shall rise again ;  
The Universe be pure  
The evil all away.

Then shall the promised Soshyos come and the great glory of Ahura Mazda shine for ever! The gigantic process of "Soul distillation" shall slowly but silently come to a happy end!

### To Sum up:

In Zarathushtra we find a living Personality, a hero to fight against the element of Evil and for the furtherance

of Good, a rare soul enthusiastic for establishing a *new cause*. In His struggles and sufferance there is nothing unnatural; in His utterances and actions, there is full Trust in His Maker. In the Gáthás we watch Him moving amidst affairs earthly, but at the same time trying His best to allure people to *brighter worlds*, while He Himself is ready to lead the way. So that we have useful **Lessons to learn** from his living example :—

- (1) Let us follow in the footsteps of our holy MASTER to be, like Himself, *steady* reformers, to move onward with time, but to have always “a reverend attitude” towards the Past. The pendulum of Time swings to the right as well as to the left, swings but eternally and faithfully, while the hand of the clock marks out an *endless* line of Progress till the day of Renovation.
- (2) Let us learn to live our life *by sufferance*. Our life is not a bed of roses, there is true happiness in woe. The more the stone wastes, the more the statue grows. The very veins, which make the marble look beautiful, are results only of contortion, fusion and regeneration. Life, in fact, is one long, serious *poem* with all its ups and downs, its hollows and heights.
- (3) Let us resolve upon doing always our duty, come what may. The river *must* run onwards, whatever be the earth-obstacles and waterfalls in its course.
- (4) Let “enthusiasm” be our motto, for success is certain on the side of the virtuous.

And (5) let us be teachers of humanity. Let us rise at first by honest study of nature and nature’s laws and let us then raise along with ourselves others who might be ignorant of the Law.



BOOK 5

OUTLINES OF SERMONS  
ON ZOROASTRIANISM



# Outlines of Sermons on Zoroastrianism

## I.

### Beauties of Zoroastrianism

**C**HARACTERISTICS of the religion before Zoroaster.  
Daevayasnism. Primitive elements. Worship of many gods or deities. Naturalistic traits.

Reformers of religion before Prophet Zoroaster, Gayomard, Hoshang, Jamsheed and others. Zoroastrianism as a refinement over the old faith. Monotheistic teaching. Belief in *one* God. A high conception of God in the Avesta. No idolatry. Ahura Mazda the creator and preserver of laws and order.

Kind of worship, natural.--

"From nature to nature's God."

Zoroaster's concession to the masses. *Glorification* of Sun, Moon, waters, etc., allowed.

Fire and its service. Establishment of Átash Beheráms and Aghiáriés. Ancient remains of fire-temples in Persia.

The everlasting Fire of Zoroastrians. No fire-worship. But fire a means to an end.

The first and foremost doctrine of Salvation :

"Ill to the evil, pure blessings to the good." "As you sow, so shall you reap."

Doctrine of a future life. Immortality of the soul. The judgment after death. Man's position in the universe. His responsibilities.

Dualistic principle—a philosophic solution. Zoroastrian moral code—perfect. Good thoughts, words and deeds. “Purity” as the essence of Zoroastrianism. Fire a perfect purifier. Ethical teachings of Zoroaster. To speak the truth—the most important ethical principle. “The love of the Parsees for truth is recognised by all ancient writers, particularly Herodotus, Xenophon and Plato.” Worship of the Great Deed—a unique point. No asceticism preached. Work is worship. Activity of life highly praised. (*Vide* Song No. 15.) Free will given to man—“Hate the evil, embrace the good.” Absence of *miracles* in our Faith. Our faith of “rationality and practicability.” Zoroastrianism highly spoken of by non-Zoroastrians. No blind belief. “Do if you *can*.”

Zoroaster's further prophecy. Frashokereti or the Day of Judgment promised.

“Benefit is the end of nature.”

Mark. The fact that the religion of Zoroaster has still survived after many ages and amidst its own struggle for existence proves its universal character.

## II.

### Development of Zoroastrianism: Its influence in the World

The religion of ancient Persia. Preached by Prophet Zoroaster for Hafta (seven) Keshwars, about 1000 B.C. Spread of the Faith after Zoroaster, as far as Hindustán in the east and Greece in the west. Partial destruction of the religious lore

after Alexander's conquest of Persia. The dark age setting in. Partial revival in the time of the Parthian king, Vologeses I.

The renaissance or revival of learning in the time of Ardashir Bábegán of the Sassanian dynasty 226 to 240 A.D. Work continued by Shápur and Nosherván Ádal. Downfall of the Sassanians. Another period of decadence 7th to 18th century. Revival once more in the 19th century. Western scholarship and study of the Zend-Avesta. Zoroastrianism in relation to other faiths.

Parallels in *India*. A comparison of the Gáthic and Vedic writings. Their common origin, resemblance in ideas and language.

Influence of Zoroastrianism on Greece, Rome and other parts of Europe.

*Prof. Mac Muller*:—"There were periods in the history of the world when the worship of Ormuzd threatened to rise triumphant on the ruins of the temples of all other gods. If the battles of Marathon and Salamis had been lost, and Greece had succumbed to Persia, the state religion of the empire of Cyrus, which was the worship of Ormuzd, *might have become the religion of the whole civilised world*. Persia had absorbed the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires; the Jews were either in Persian captivity or under Persian sway at home; the sacred monuments of Egypt had been mutilated by the hands of Persian soldiers. The edicts of the king—the king of the kings—were sent to India, Greece, to Scythia, and to Egypt and if 'by the grace of Ahura Mazda,' Darius had crushed the liberty of Greece, the purer faith of Zoroaster might easily have superseded Olympian fables."

*Through Mithraism*:—Mithra equal to Mitra of the Sanskrit—a very old Divinity in the Indo-Iranian pantheon. Mithra the angel of light and truth.



Faintly pictured in the Vedic hymns, and alluded to in Greek and Roman classical literature.

His worship spread throughout Asia Minor, and *Babylon*: first transfer to Rome in the 1st century B.C. Later on a firm foothold in Italy. Encouragement by Roman Emperors. Mithraism supported their "Divine Right of Kings."

Moral influence of Mithraism: Communities found together. Mithra ever on the side of the faithful. Immortality of the soul and Resurrection taught. Doctrine of heaven and hell.

Relation to Christianity: Interesting aspect—antagonism to Christianity. Resemblance between the two and hence a great struggle. From 275 A.D. its downfall. Aggression of Christianity. More effective causes: Its mythical and *not* personal character, also cumbrous mythology; disappearance in the 4th century.

Prof. Franz Cumont traced the progress of Mithraism through the Balkan Peninsula, Italy, the Rhine lands, Britain, Spain and Latin Africa. The late M. Renan said: "If the world had not become Christian, it would have become Mithraistic."

*Manichaeism*:—Takes the place of Mithraism. Sectarian movements in Persia in the Sassanian times. Mani the leader of one. Mani educated at Ctesiphon. Mostly led a missionary life in Transoxiana, Western China as far as India. But sought little favour from Shapur I and Bahram I. Professed to blend the teachings of Christ with the old Persian Magism.

Manichaean system essentially one of "consistent uncompromising dualism." Also ascetic and pessimistic character. United an ancient mythology and a thorough-going materialistic dualism with an exceedingly simple spiritual worship and *strict* morality.

Its spread through Persia, Mesopotamia, Transoxiana, Greece and Roman Empire (280). Rapid spread in Roman Empire (330). Its influence on the Catholic church till the 13th century.

*Mazdakism*:—Rise of Mazdak about (500 A.D.) in the reign of Kobád. Mazdakism another heresy. Its effects. Ultimate destruction in the time of Khosrou. His communistic sociatistic creed.

*Influence of Zoroastrianism on Egypt.*

Zoroastrianism prepared the way for the *new deity* of Ptolemy I. His faith in the silent work of the Iranian Mazdayasnism.

*Influence on Mahomedanism*:—Arabs under the sway and influence of the Sassanian Zoroastrians.

Mark the indirect influence of Mahomedanism in Europe through Mahomedan Universities in Spain in the dark ages.

Thus the Persians called "the Puritans of the old world." "Our own religion in ancient Persia" by Dr. Mills. Statements made therein of the analogy of Zoroastrian scriptures with the Jewish in (1) the nature of the deity, (2) the doctrine of a future life, (3) the devil, (4) the temptation, and (5) personal and universal judgments.

### III

#### Humata—Hukhta—Hvarshta

**Avesta :**

"Vispa humata, vispa hukhta, vispa hvarshta vahisstem anguhîm ashaeta."

**English :**

All good thoughts, words and deeds lead us on to Bahesht (Song No. 5).

"The Zoroastrian religion has the extreme merit of standing upon three shining supports, which a child could see and comprehend, the spirit of which trilogy guides the Law of Mazdayasnism."

Repeated occurrence of the three words, Humata, Hukhta and Hvarshta, in many parts of the Zend-Avesta. Reference to prayers (1) Frastuye humatoi byascha (2) Haptan Yasht and (3) Duâ Vispa Humata.

Humata or Good Thoughts, the "Seed-ground" of Good Words and Deeds.

Effects of an evil thought in the early morning on the full course of the day—Misery.

Man—"a creature, joying in reason and *perfect in speech*."

Conclusion: In doing good deeds we build up the edifice of our Faith. Man's only object in this frail corporeal world is "*Work for Ahura Mazda*."

## IV

### Death and Disposal of the Dead

Meaning of Death—Separation of the soul from the Body.  
 "Death is the crown of life."

State of the body after death. The Druj Nasush—the demon of death attacks the dead body. The body decays and is dangerous to other living bodies.

Therefore no Mazdayasnian can touch a corpse.

*Ceremonies after Death*: (1) For the Body (2) For the Soul.

[ Notes on the Four Days' Ceremonies are given on pp. 74, 75. ]

*For the Body*: One *Ashem Vohu* to be recited near the body just after death.

A spot about 8' by 3' on the *ground floor* to be made clean.

The body is washed with fresh water, covered with *white* clothes only, and placed on stone slabs or sand floor.

The body to be disposed of within 24 hours. Nasa-Sálárs (corpse-bearers) to work in pairs of 2, 4 or 6. Iron bier and wrappings of white cloth only are used.

*To the Dokhma* (the Tower of Silence):

Priests and other mourners follow the *Pádest in pairs* and observe the *Báj* of Sarosh.

*The Dokhma*: a round Tower-like building 20 to 25 feet high. A sloping stair of iron or stone leads to the entrance. Over the entrance there is something like an arch in which a piece of glass is fixed to receive light from an oil lamp, kept burning in another building 100 yards distant, called the *Sagadi*.

*Inside the Dokhma*: a circular platform about 300 ft. in circumference.

3 rows of *Pávis* or portions for dead bodies marked out (1) for males, (2) for females and (3) for children. Footpaths or corpse-bearers.

The decaying matter disposed off by birds. Effect of the Sun's heat.

*Dry* bones deposited in the *Bhandár* (central well) about 150 feet in circumference.

The rain water is carried through holes in the sides of the well, into 4 underground drains, connected with 4 other underground wells, with bottoms of sand. At the end of the drains charcoal is kept. *Mark.* The filters and the sanitary condition of the Tower.

*Mark.* The principle of unity of life and matter in the Tower of Silence. No *distinction* kept after death.

## V

### Life after Death—the Soul

Immortality of the soul. The idea of a future life, one of the important doctrines of Zoroastrianism. Hope for a better life the only key to success.

Books on the doctrine of Heaven and Hell :

Hádokht Nast: the 2nd and 3rd Fargards only extant, and the book of Mino Kherad.

The progress of the Soul :

For three days and three nights near the corpse or the place of death or the atmospheric region of the earth. On the fourth day (chahrum) progress to the Chinvat Bridge (the Bridge of Judgment) for justice: Eternal Dispensation of justice by angels: Rashnu with the Balance, Mithra the Judge and Sarosh.

The Soul of the Pious (Towards that Best Light) :

The passport given for the Chinvat Bridge. The soul meets with the fragrance of Heaven. The conscience in the shape of a charming angel. The Soul enters the blissful region. The

three stages or gates of Heaven. Humata, Hukhta and Hvarshata gates passed through. The fourth stage and the entry into the Best Existence of Holy Light and Entire Bliss.

The Soul of the wicked (down into the Valley of Hell) :

The first three miserable and painful days and nights. On the fourth day the Soul approaches the Chinvat Bridge. The great sentence passed by the Judges of the Bridge. "Thou art weighed and found wanting." No pass given over the Bridge. The soul is hurled deep down into the hellish region. Conscience in the shape of a dreadful spirit presented. The three stages or gates of hell. Dushmata, Duzukhta and Duzvarshata gates open. The fourth stage of the dark chaotic region of Ahriman and his accomplices.

The future of the World :

Promised "the Great Day, when we shall all of us be contemporaries and make our appearance together." Belief in Resurrection. The Day of Judgment also promised. The coming of Soshyós or the Benefactor prophesied. The end of the World in purity.

## VI

### Sudreh and Kushti

**Avesta :**

"Spaeta daenayâô Mâzdayasnôish upamanem."

**English :**

"White" is the symbol of the Mazdayasnian religion.

Our two births in this world: the one Natural and the other on the Navjot (Initiation) day. Also equal to Nokzât or a new invoker.

**Imperative commandment in the Vendidad to put on Sudreh and Kushti.**

**Meaning of "Sudreh," the Straight Path, a white garment.**

Sudreh showing the purity of the body. Relief from bodily diseases on account of the pure skin. The sign of Girebân near the neck, an emblem of storing up virtuous and holy deeds in life.

**Meaning of Kushti:** a waist band. Necessity of this Band for industrious persons. Kushti made of 72 threads, signifying the 72 chapters of the Yasna.

The four knots signify (1) a worshipper of Mazda, (2) a follower of Zoroaster, (3) an opponent of Dacva, and (4) an observer of Ahura's Commandments.

*The Moral:*—We must gird up our loins in performing holy deeds; Sudreh and Kushti must be put on by all true Zoroastrians, thus showing their Faith. In performing the ceremony of Sudreh and Kushti so often in a day, we indirectly remember Ahura Mazda, our God, every now and then—thus a means to an end.

## VII.

### **The Sacred Books of the Parsees**

**Extent of the Original Avesta—21 Nasks.**

The Zend-Avesta of to-day a mere fragment of the extensive Sacred literature.

*Seven Languages of the Zend-Avesta:*

1. The oldest Gáthic tongue, *e. g.*, The sacred Gáthás.

2. The middle Avesta, *e.g.*, The Haptan Yasht.
3. The later Avesta, *e.g.*, The Yashts and the Khordeh Avesta.
4. The Cuneiform language in the old Persian Inscriptions at Bahistun, the memorial of Darius Hystaspes, *e.g.*, The five columns on the Bahistun Rocks.
5. The Pahlavi language into which the whole Avesta was translated in the later Sassanian period after the "sufferance of an unfortunate fate by the Avesta literature at the hands of Alexander," *e.g.*, The Pahlavi literature, translations of the Avesta with commentaries.
6. The Pázend language, *e.g.*, Patel Pashemáni.
7. The pure Persian language, *e.g.*, The Reváyats etc.

*The extant Avesta Literature :*

1. Yasna (containing the Gáthic hymns). 2. Visparad.  
3. Vendidad. 4. Yashts, and 5. Khordeh Avesta (containing Nyaishes, Gáhs and other fragments of daily prayers).
- (1) *Yasna* : The chief liturgical Book recited in honour of all the Archangels and angels : altogether 72 Chapters.
- Chapters 1 to 27 : formal invitations to the offering, addressed to all the Amsháspands and Yazads in order of merit.
- Chapters 28 to 55 : the pure Gáthás and the Haptan Yasht (called the centre and culmination of the whole of Yasna).



Chapters 56 to 72: formal invocations and the conclusion of the whole Yasna ceremony.

- (2) *Visparad*: A supplement to the Yasna, celebrated in the Gahambár (season) ceremonials.

24 Kardáhs or chapters—a repetition of the formal invocations as in the Yasna.

- (3) *Vendidád*: The Law Book: "the Leviticus of the Parsees." 22 chapters or Fargards, on the creation, the story of King Jamshed and his Vara (at the time of the Great Flood. Cf. Noah's Arc), the earth, disposal of dead bodies, lists of sins, child-bed cleanliness and diseases with the art of healing.

- (4) *Yashts*: The glorification hymns dedicated to the divinities:

21 *Yashts*, viz. 1. Hormuzd "God." 2. Haptan "Seven Archangels." 3. Ardibahesht "Purity." 4. Khordád "Health." 5. Áván "Water." 6. Khorshed "Sun." 7. Máh "Moon." 8. Tir "Star Sirius." 9. Gosh "Organic World." 10. Meher "Light." 11. Sarosh "Angel of Obedience." 12. Rashne "Angel of Truth." 13. Farvardin "Farohars." 14. Beherám "Victory." 15. Rám "Joy." 16. Din "Faith." 17. Ashishvang "Righteousness." 18. Áshtád "Justice." 19. Jamyád "Earth." 20. Hom "Plant." 21. Vanant "Star." Also 22. Vistásp and 23. Sirojáhi Yashts.

- (5) *Khordeh Avesta*: The Minor or small Avesta. A compilation of various common prayers, an extract of the entire Avesta for the use of laymen; not entirely written in Avesta but also in Pázend and Persian.

*Pahlavi Literature :*

- I. Literal Pahlavi Translations *with Commentaries* of the (1) Vendidad, (2) Yasna including the Gáthás, (3) Visparad, (4) Yashts (Ormazd, Behrám, Sarosh Hádokht, Haptan, Khorshed, and Mahábokhtár), (5) Nyáishes (Khorshed, Áván and Átásh) (6) Afringáns of Gahambár, Dahmán Gáthá, Aídáfarvash, and Sirojá, (7) Nirangistán, (8) Aogemadechá, (9) Vajar Kard Dinik.
- II. Original Pahlavi writings: (1) Dinkard, (2) Bundishn, (3) Dádestan-é Dini, (4) Minokherad (5) Sháyast lá Sháyast, (6) Viráf Námeb, (7) Jánuspi, (8) Behman Yasht, (9) Mádigán-e Gosht Frayán, (10) Epistles of Mánushcheher, (11) Zátsparam, (12) Áshirvád, (13) Afrins, and (14) Patet.
- III. Miscellaneous, (1) Kárnamak-e Ardeshir Bábegán, (2) Yádgár-e Zarirán, (3) Shatrôihâ-e Irán, (4) Mádigán-e hazár dádestán.

*DETAILS**Dinkard :*

“ Most comprehensive, philosophical and learned work in Pahlavi, giving an abstract of all the original 21 Nasks.”

*Zátsparam :*

Law literature, containing the Law against the demons and the Law of Zarthost.

*Bundahishn :*

- The Genesis of the Parsis, containing an account of the creation of the world, and the struggle between Ahriman and Ormuzd described in metaphorical language. (2 editions, one larger and the other smaller.)

*Sháyast-lá-Sháyast :*

- The Proper and the Improper : a compilation of miscellaneous laws and customs with memoranda of ceremonies.

*Pahlavi Commentaries :*

- The old Iranian customs and manners of the later Avestaic period carefully preserved.

*Pázend Literature :*

- I. Pázend translations of Pahlavi books, *e.g.*, Bundahishn, Minokherad, Bahman Yasht, Viráf Námech and Aogemadaechá.
- II. Prayers in Pázend, *e.g.*, Patels, Áfrins, Benedictions.
- III. Nirangs recited after the Yashts.
- IV. Setáyashes, *e.g.* Nám-e Sepás, Setáyash of Ahura Mazda.

*Persian Literature :*

- I. Sad-dar of 100 chapters.
- II. Zarthóst Námech (Life of Zoroaster).
- III. Fársi Sháyast lá Sháyast.
- IV. Fársi Reváyats : Letters and Replies of learned priests from Hindustan to Persia.

*Sanskrit Literature :*

Some portions of the Avesta and Pahlavi books are translated by Dastur Naryosang Dhaval. Collected Sanskrit Writings of the Parsees :

- (1) Khurda-Avesta Arthah, (2) Ijisni, (3) Mainîu Khardda, (4) Skanda Gumâni Gujâra, (5) Arddâ Gvirâ, (6) Jahishna-i Dânak Frokhzâd, (7) Glossaries, etc.

*Miscellaneous :*

- (1) Cuneiform Inscriptions on Persian Rocks.
- (2) Translations and Commentaries in the Gujarati, English, German and French languages.

## VIII.

## Ups and Downs in the Story of Persia

*Five Dynasties of Iranian Rulers :*

Pishdâdian	}	<i>prehistoric.</i>
Kyânian		

Hakhâmanian : 558 B.C. to 330 B.C.

Ashkânian : 256 B.C. to 226 A.D.

Sâssânian : 226 A.D. to 651 A.D.

The Persian Empire: oldest. No written records, internal or external, of the first two dynasties. Largest extent in the Hakhâmanian period. Conflict of the Empire with Greece, Rome and Ancient India. Remains to be found in Egypt, Babylonia and Persia proper. Latest

discovery of a palace, resembling the Persepolis ruins, at Pataliputra, U.P. Decay of the Empire. Want of internal organisation.

- I. The Pishdadian Period: Founded by Gayômarz or Kayômarz. Only Avesta reference in the Farvardin Yasht: The first prehistoric king of ancient Persia; the first receiver of Ahura Mazda's Word. Uncertainty about other kings, altogether *eleven*:

- |              |               |              |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1. Gayômarz  | 2. Hoshang    | 3. Tehmurasp |
| 4. Jamsheed  | 5. Zohâk      | 6. Faridun   |
| 7. Minocher  | 8. Nodar      | 9. Afrâsiâb  |
| 10. Jotemash | 11. Gershasp. |              |

- II. The Kyanian Period: Chief city Balkh.

Differences of opinion regarding this dynasty. Altogether *nine* rulers. Some of the last kings properly belong to the next period. Names of King Gushtâsp and his son Aspandiâr mentioned in the Avesta. No further internal evidence available. Only certain event: Prophet Zoroaster, a contemporary of Gushtâsp.

Zoroaster's birth-date uncertain. From 6,000 B.C. to the 7th century B.C. Latest researches fix about 1,000 B.C. Struggles between the Turânians and the Irânians during this period.

1. Kae-kobâd. 2. Kae-kâus. 3. Kae-khosru. 4. Kae-Lohrâsp. 5. Kae-Gushtâsp (Birth of Zarathushtra Spitama). 6. Behman. 7. Homâe. 8. Dârâb. 9. Dârâ.

- III. The Hakhâmanian Period: Chief city of Persepolis.

True Persian History begins here. The title "The Great," given to all the Emperors. Many conquests made

during this period. The subjugation of Greece. Stone inscriptions.

*Ten Emperors:*

1. Cyrus the Great. Founder of the Persian Empire  
558 B.C. to 529 B.C.
2. Cambyzes. Conquered Egypt. 529 B. C. to  
522 B.C.
3. Smerdis (Usurper). Mâgism prevailed. 522 B.C.  
to 521 B.C.
4. Darius I. Regulated the Empire. His Reforms:  
Postal system, mint, Old Suez canal, Architecture  
521 B.C. to 485 B.C.
5. Xerxes. Athens set on fire. Gave up Macedonia.  
485 B.C. to 465 B.C.
6. Artâxerxes I (Ardeshir I). Made Peace with  
Greece. 465 B.C. to 425 B.C.
7. Darius II. Took tribute from the Greeks of Asia.  
425 B.C. to 405 B.C.
8. Artâxerxes II (Ardeshir II). Entitled "Memnon."  
Appointed Arbitrator by the Greeks. 405 B.C. to  
359 B.C.
9. Artâxerxes III (Ardeshir III). Oppressive, killed  
all the remaining members of the Royal Family.  
359 B.C. to 340 B.C.

NOTE.—Decay of the Empire begins. Weakness of  
the Sovereigns. The Satraps or Rulers  
of various provinces become independent.  
Luxury at the court.

10. Darius III. Called "Kodomenas." 340 B.C. to  
330 B.C.

**largest extent of the Persian Empire: Summit of glory:**

**Boundaries E.—Tibet and River Indus.**

**W.—Tripoli in Africa, the Mediterranean the Ægean Sea, and Turkey.**

**N.—River Danube, Black Sea, River Oxus Caucasus Mt.**

**S.—Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea.**

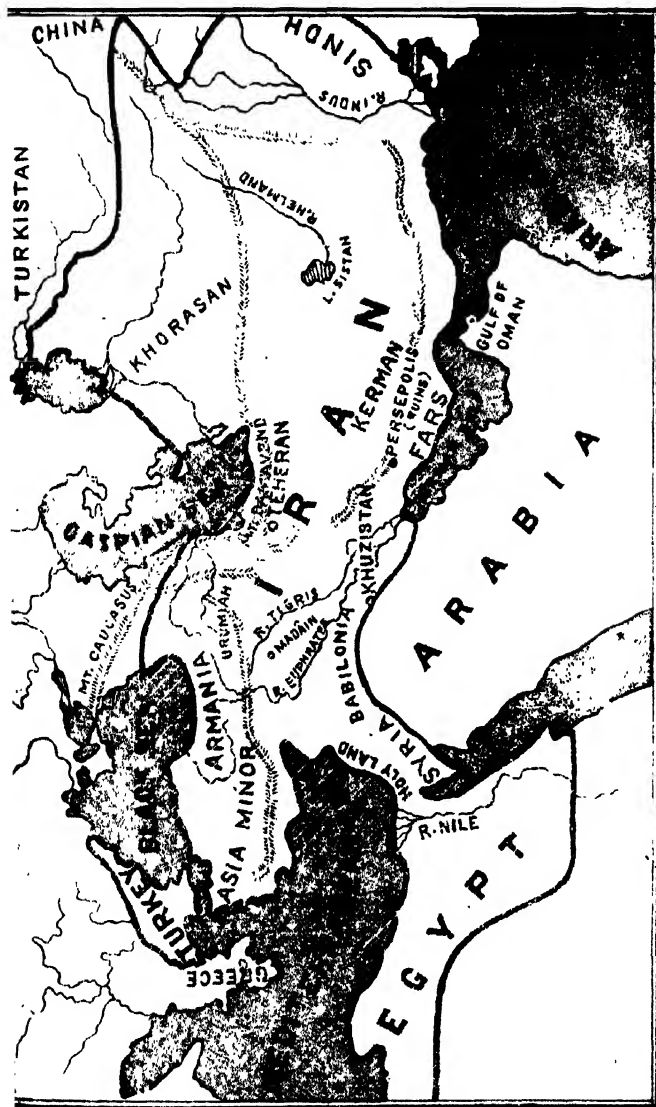
**Size nearly four times modern Persia (Sea Map).**

**Coming of Alexander the Great. Negligence of the Persian Court. The battle of Grenáiceus.**

**Furious battles by Persian heroes. Issus, another battle 330 B.C. The Royal family and treasure fall into Alexander's hands.**

**The battle of Arbella, last struggle of the King 331 B.C. Weakness all around. Province after province subdued by the Greeks. Pitiful end of the last sovereign of the Hakhámanian dynasty. Burning of Persepolis the capital. Destruction and removal of precious old literature. The Royal Library and its fate.**

**IV. *The Ashkánian or Párthian Period:* A gap in the Persian History. Nomadic tribes to rule. Some provinces remain Persian. Arshak founds a new dynasty of 28 kings. Last King Ardanán overpowered by Ardeshir the Sassanian. Age of Mithridátes the Great. Valkhash. Three great wars with the Romans. Coins available. 256 B.C. to 226 A.D.**



Map of the Ancient Persian Empire Shaded portions indicate the largest extent reached in the time of Darius I, about 500 B.C. (Zenith of the Empire)





V. The Sassanian Period: *Capital Maddin*.

Rise against Parthia. Regeneration of Persia. Fights with the Romans and the Turks. Revival of Learning. Great glory of the Aryan race once more.

## 1. Ardeshir Bâbegân: 226 to 240 A.D.

Subjugation of Ardavân. End of the Pârthian rule. Conquests from Babylonia up to Hindustân. Embassy to Rome. Reforms of Ardeshir. Revival of the religion of Zoroaster. Translation into the state language Pahlavi of the entire extant Avesta. Ideals of Persian education. The Book of the Kârnâmeh—a Romance of his achievements.

## 2. Shahpur I: 240 to 271 A.D.

Greatest event of the reign. Capture of the Roman Emperor Valerian. Shahpur as King-maker of the Romans.

Appearance of Mâni the heretic. Spread of the Christian Church. Miraculous paintings of Mâni. His preaching a heresy. Punishment.

The Russian nation brought forward by the Persian Emperor.

## 3. Hormuzd I: 271 to 272 A.D.

Mercy shown to Mâni.

## 4. Beherâm I: 272 to 275 A.D.

Murder of Mâni.

## 5. Beherâm II: 275 to 292 A.D.

Gave up Armenia.

## 6. Beherâm III: 292 to 293 A.D.

7. Narsi : 293 to 301 A.D.

Defeat of Calarius.

8. Hormuzd II : 301 to 309 A.D.

A just ruler.

9. Shahpur II (called Shâpur the Great) : 309 to 379.

Defeated the Arabs. Fought with Rome and made a glorious treaty.

10. Ardeshir II : 379 to 383 A.D.

11. Shahpur III : 383 to 388 A.D.

12. Beherâm IV : 388 to 399 A.D.

13. Yezdezard I : 399 to 419 A.D.

An oppressive ruler.

14. Beherâm V (called Beherâmgore) : 420 to 440 A.D.

Great fights with Rome and the Khâkân of Turkey. Adventures in India. Hind to pay tribute to Persia.

15. Yezdezard II : 440 to 457 A.D.

Conversion of Armenians. Defeat of Turkey.

16. Hormuzd III : 457 to 459 A.D.

17. Firôz : 459 to 483 A.D.

The Armenians oppressed. Defeated and killed by Turks.

18. Belâsh : 483 to 487 A.D.

Peace with Turkey. Regulation of Armenia.

19. Jâmâsp : 488 to 501 A.D.

**20. Kobād I : 501 to 531 A.D.**

Conquered nomadic tribes of Khezar round the Caspian Sea.

Appearance of Mazdak, another heretic. Kobad won over by him. Dethroned by his people. Regained kingdom with the help of Turkistan.

**21. Nosherván (called Khosroe the Great) : 531 to 579 A.D.**

The Greatest of the Sassanians. The Persian Akbar. Always a conqueror. The Zenith of the Persian Empire in his time.

Conquest in Western Asia, Mingralia. Control over the Roman Empire. Reforms of Nosherván the Just. Justice and administrative abilities. Reforms in the military. Encouragement to science and industry. Education, schools and universities.

**22. Hormuzd IV : 579 to 590 A.D.**

Cruel and tyrant monarch. Defeat of the Khâkân. Revolt of his subjects. Civil War. Revolt of Beherâm Chubin. Murder.

**23. Khusro Purviz : 590 to 628 A.D.**

Escaped from Beheram Chubin. Timely help from Rome. Conquest of parts of Mesopotamia, Palestine. Rise against Africa. Khusro's great glory. Wealth in the state treasury. Museums.

Rebellion, another civil war. Beginning of decay.

**24. Kobād II : 628 to 629 A.D.**

Royal family members assassinated. Fall of the Sassanian empire. State intrigues.

25. Ardeshir III :  
 26. Purândokht :  
 27. Azarmidokht : } 629 to 632 A.D.  
 28. Yezdezard III : 632 to 651 A.D.

Great-grandson of Khosru Purviz. Rise of the Arabs: Wars with Arabia. *Want of Union* in the empire. Success of Arabs. Malice. Defeats of Persians. Battle of Cadesia 636 A.D. Decisive Battle of Nahavend 651 A.D. Pitiful condition of Yezdezard. A fugitive. Slain in *Merv*.

*Note.*—The defeat of Yezdezard marks the total destruction of the old Kyânian glories. It dooms not only the Iranian Sovereignty but also the Faith. Persia begins to decay ever since this evil day. The Sun of the Iranians sets and the Crescent of the Caliph rises. The cry of the Muazzain is heard, while the helpless Zoroastrians become homeless. Some yield to the cruel sword of the Mahomedan and embrace the Koran; others escape from the Koran and still burn the Holy Fire in subterranean caverns. Above all, there is ruin everywhere, and the cries of Allah shut off the wailing and lamenting of the dying Mâgi.

## IX

### The Parsees in India : Their Mission

Total destruction of the old Persian Empire. Sweeping of Zoroastrianism out of Iran. The helpless Zoroastrians converted by force to Islamism. Mobads become Mullas. Zoroastrian fields become deserts.

The faithful are chased. Retreat into Khorassán for about 100 years. Next emigration to the Isle of Ormuzd. There also chased. Last resource—a voyage to Hindustán. Stay at Div for 19 years.

The last voyage. The Parsee Pilgrim Fathers to colonise Gujarát. Tempest-tossed. Their prayer for divine aid. An Átash-Beherám to build in thanksgiving. Sanjan Shore touched Róǰ Bahman Máh Tir, 715 A. D. Jádao Ráná the then ruling King of Gujarat interviewed. Work of Neryosang. Translations of portions of the Avesta into Sanskrit. The enlightened Ráná pleased to find strange resemblances. Concessions granted. Treaty with the Ráná. Defensive Alliance. Other conditions: Forswearing the use of arms and adoption of dress, etc. Installation of the first Fire Altar on the Bárôt Hill in the vicinity of Sanján. Reference book: "Kisseh Sanján". No other written or monumental records—a historical blank. Ruins of Sanján. Remains of the Fort, a Dokhma and other mounds rich in ruins. Archæological excavations most desirable here. The Sanjan Pillar, a Pilgrimage.

300 years of Peace in Sanján. Parsee work for succeeding centuries. Preservation of individuality. No assimilation into the masses of India. Chief objects: religious and racial. The Parsees a distinct race in India.

Troubles again. Mahomedan enemies up to the last. Mahmood Begadá from Ahmedábád—a Mohomedan Viceroy. Sends General Aluf Khan with 30,000 against the Ráná. The faithful Parsees to aid. 14,000 Zoroustrians under the command of Ardeshir. First victory, but final defeat.

Leaving Sanján. The Sacred Fire removed. 12 years in Mountain Caves. Thence to Bánsdá. Parsees in Navsári 1142 A. D. In about 1464 A. D. Udvádá, the Parsee place of Pilgrimage in the 9th Parsee month, Ádar.

Another calamity: the Varião massacre. The Ráná of Ruttonpore's attack on a Parsee gathering at Varião. Mark. Heroic defence of Parsee females in male attire.

Progress of the Parsees. Their Business and industry. The coming of the British in India. The making of Bombay City. Parsee ship-builders and merchants to aid. Thanks to the illustrious British Rulers to-day. Protection and religious freedom. Loyalty of the Parsees invariably shown to the British Ráj. The Parsee genius prominent in industry, education, etc. The first Parsee Baronet in India: Sir Jamshedjee Jejeebhoy. Flourishing condition of Parsees under the ægis of the British Empire. Contrast with the poor condition of the few Iranis still living in Shiráz, Teherán, Yezd, Kermán and other places in their old home, overpowered by Mahomedans.

## X

### Persia To-day

*Modern Persia: 12 provinces.*—(1) Mázandarán, chief city Sari; (2) Gilán, chief city Resht; (3) Azarbaeján, chief city Tabriz; (4) Khurdistán, chief city Sehna; (5) Luristán, chief city Khorámábád; (6) Khuzistán, chief city Shustar; (7) Fársistan, chief city Shiráz; (8) Baluchistán, chief city Khelát; (9) Kermán, chief city Kermán; (10) Khorásán chief city Mashhad; (11) Asterábád, chief city Astrábád; (12) Irak, chief city Teherán, the capital of *Modern Persia*.

*Old places:*—Persepolis, Urumiah, Ták-i-Bostán, Kermán-shah, Behistán, Hamadán or ancient Ecbatáná, Isfahán, Shirás, Yezd and Rae (called the Bride of the World).

*Ruins:*—Persepolis (Palace of Darius, the Grand Staircase, the Hall of Hundred Pillars, etc.) Rock of Behistun, Naksh-



Zoroastrian citizens of Teheran, the modern capital of Persia





i-Rustam, Pazârgat (Astodân or Bone-preserver of Cyrus), Naksh-i Shâpur (in Fârsistan) Ecbatânâ (underground), Susâ (in Khuzistân) Tâk-i Kasrá (in Mesopotamia) or Aevân-i Kasrá (a great arch and Hall of Noshervan), Azarbaejân, Bâkh (Fire temple), Takht-i Suleman (fortified town).

*Climate*:—Round the Caspian Sea: continual rain; moist and Malarial. "If you desire death, go to Gilân or Mâzandarân." Note the reference made in the Avesta about the devils of Mâzandarân.

The driest place, the Desert called Biâbân-i-Lut, the greatest Salt Desert of Khorâssân. The rest a Tableland. Edges of the Tableland everywhere higher than the interior, thus forming a curious basin. Mountainous districts with few rivers and lakes. Shirâz 6000 ft. above sea level. English Climate; berries grow there. Height of the Damâvand, 18,600 ft. Weather on the whole dry. Whirlwind of dust, scanty rainfall. Clouds reduced to vapour on reaching the earth. Rivers slope into the central sandy hollow of the basin.

Winter very severe. Lowest Temperature at Mashhad (Khorâssân)—19°C. Summer tempt 62°C. The zone between the Caspian and the Elburz very productive but unhealthy. Azarbaejân Mountain districts populated and cultivated. Other artificial oasis. *Seasons*:—Four, winter most prominent. Snow in many parts of Persia.

*Hydro-graphical Areas*:—(1) N. of Azarbaejan, Gilân and Mâzandarân, the country watered by streams flowing into the Caspian Sea (2) The Southern and S. W. region draining into the Tigris, the Euphrates and the Persian Gulf. (The Plateau destitute of vegetation. Almost the whole a desert.)

*Geological Features*:—Striking feature: prevalence of formations such as gravel, sand, clay, etc.

The great plains covering half the country full of alluvial loam or gravel.

*Mountain formations*:—(1) The Zagros chain (Mt. Ararat to Shiraz) of Cretaceous and Tertiary formations. Old granite. Occurrence of Voluta. (2) The Elburz range (including Azarbaiján) of Mesozoic and Paleozoic formations. Carboniferous beds and Jurassic or Liassic rocks.

*Volcanic outbursts*:—Common. Mt. Damávand still active with heated gases.

*Varieties of rocks*:—(1) Lime-stones, sand-stones, etc., in Mázarán. (2) Silurian rocks in Kázvin and Shahrud. (3) Carboniferous and Cretaceous rocks in the Elburz. (4) Volcanic in the Sahend, Kázvin and Damávand. (5) Metamorphic and granite rocks near Lake Urumiah and the lower ranges of the Elburz. (6) Sedimentary formation upon Volcanic rocks *e.g.*, beds of rock-salt, gypsum, sulphur, pyrites, specular iron ore, etc. (miocene beds) near Persian Gulf. (7) Mineral springs, and Cu ores of valuable deposits near Damávand. (8) Ash hills, Ash-mounds, near Urumiah, containing deposits of ashes.

*Botanical subdivisions*:—(Persia zoologically a *terra incognita*.) (1) The Persian province proper—a plateau destitute of vegetation. (2) The Caspian provinces—Gilán and Mázarán, dense forests. (3) The wooded slopes of the Zagros including the oak forest near Shiráz. (4) Persian Mesopotamia being the eastern portion of the plain watered by the Tigris and the Euphrates. (5) The fertile low-lands on the shores of the Persian gulf and Baluchistán up-to an elevation of 3000 ft. Tropical forms such as tamarisk and mimosa conspicuous.

*Details of Zoo*:—(1) Forms of species of fauna, as Palearctic and other desert forms. (2) Dense forest decidedly Palearctic,

(3) Indian or Indo-African forms. *Vertebrate classes*:—Mammals. birds, reptiles and amphibia.

*Government*:—Quájárian Dynasty (a Turkish tribe) ruling to-day. Sultan Ahmed Sháh, present ruler, 7th in rank. Mahomed Ali Sháh—despotic, ex-Sháh, deposed. Formation of Persian Parliament, and constitutional form of Government.

Modern Persia still a backward country. Masses very, illiterate, and fanatic. Travelling unsafe. Káfars ill-treated. Slow improvement. British aid.



BOOK 6

A REVIEW OF ANCIENT  
PERSIAN POETRY



# A Review of Ancient Persian Poetry

---

“Presume not God to scan,  
The proper study of mankind is *man*,” Pope.

## The Choice of Literature

It is man's important mission in life to study human nature and to know what and where he is. This can only be done by studying the best written thoughts and feelings of human beings of all ages. One of the most educative and humanising of all studies is Literature, the object of which, according to Cardinal Newman, is “to open the mind, to correct it, to refine it, to enable it to comprehend and digest its knowledge, to give it power over its own faculties.” Literature, again, is a great elevator of human character. So said Morley in his address to the students of the London Society in 1887: “Literature is one of the instruments, and one of the most powerful instruments, for forming character, for giving us men and women armed with reason, braced by knowledge, clothed with steadfastness and courage, and inspired by that public spirit and public virtue, of which it has been well said that they are the brightest ornaments of the mind of man.” Above all, Literature enlarges our moral vision, and displaying fresher vistas of life creates an *ideal* to cherish within ourselves. It is a common-ground upon which even those filled with “*divine* discontent” can meet.

## The Scope of Ancient Persian Literature

Human nature is the same all the world over. At a time when most of the Western countries could hardly dream of



reading or writing, there were recorded faithfully, in the Aryan land of Iran, in its many modes of expression, the sayings and preachings of some of the World's greatest Teachers, so that the scope of the Ancient Persian Literature is very wide and its character mostly religious or ethical. According to the traditional writings of the *Dinkard* there at first existed in Ancient Persia twenty-one Nasks, while Pliny the historian tells of two million verses of Zoroaster. The Arab historian Tabari talks of twelve thousand hides of inscribed writings of the Prophet, and Hermippus in the third century B.C. affirms that "the founder of the Doctrine of the Magis was the author of 20 Books, each containing 1,00,000 verses." The *Dinkard* further records that there were two copies prepared by Vishtásp, of the Avestan Encyclopædia, one placed in the Royal Treasury called Ganji Shapigán and the other in the Fortress of Documents, Dez-i Napisht.

### **Ruins of a Mighty Literature**

The Parsees, who possess to-day the remnant of this mighty Persian Literature after its long and chequered history, are ruins themselves of a mighty nation. They number not even a lac of people, and live and die in the tenets of their Prophet Zarathushtra. The little that is still preserved by them is sufficient to give an idea of the progress of the human mind through that long channel of antique thoughts and Iranian aspirations. Even what remains was enough to have inspired the Persian bard with very lofty ideas. One could not possibly remain unstirred in imagination by the varying phases presented by man as well as by nature in that land. Her hill ranges and her sweet oases, her few rivers and lakes of classic glory, her innumerable ruins of stately palaces and holy temples, and above all, her many phases of religious activity in this "battle-ground of Religions" should stir the student to the deepest. The elevating hymns of the Ancient Persian Leader, the lofty con-

ception of Bahesht and Dozakh, the simple doctrine of purity of life, the quaint worship of Mithra and his train and the diligent tilling of the soil, should fire the imagination of every antiquarian.

### Literary History

The Parsee Scriptures in their present form could be well compared to a Geological Formation of old, formed not in one age, and not by one agency, but in various ages and various agencies, eroded and washed off by the action of Time and burnt and scorched by the pressure of ages, but at the same time crystallised by a grand process of purification. This remnant is all that is left behind for the information and guidance of posterity.

There are altogether *Seven Stages* through which the Zend-Avesta has passed and they are:—(1) The Gáthic Stage. (2) The post-Gáthic Stage. (3) The Later Avesta Stage. (4) The Old Persian Stage. (5) The Interregnum from 330 B.C. to 226 A.D. (6) The Sássánian and Pahlavi Stage, and (7) The Mahomedan and Modern Persian Stage. It is difficult, in the short space at our disposal, to go through each of these lists in detail, for the whole refers to scenes moving from place to place and dates oscillating over centuries. Starting however, from the lowermost stratum of the Gáthic Songs and ending with the topmost one of Modern Persian, we shall here take a review of the *poetic* elements in all and see whether we can find any literary merits in such an old record as this.

### Verse precedes Prose

in almost all the literatures of the world, and so Hamann says, "Verse is the mother tongue of the human race, as gardening is older than agriculture, painting older than

writing and singing older than declamation." At the outset we have the Gáthás as the very foundation of Parsee philosophy, the very essence of the "Universal Faith" of the Persian Empire. Then as time went on, the Masters of the Faith added many things to the original kernel, if not in verse, in prose or versified prose. If therefore we get in one place the "qualities of order, harmony, restraint, common sense" of the classical poetry, in other places we find, though in a crude form, "the liberty of thought and imagination, and the fruits of ecstasy and imagination of the romantic side of songs." These songs on account of their primitive character, are not like the polished mass of Victorian poetry wherein we find "a new kind of poetry, in which are blended the order and harmony of the classical school and variety and imagination of the romantic." Yet we have in the Avesta a sort of romantic element, not of words and rhythm, but of thoughts, at times very transcendent and very lofty. We quote here from one of the Visions of the Prophet:—

"He, that in the beginning thus thought, 'Let the blessed realms be filled with lights,' he it is that by his wisdom created Right. Those realms which the Best Thought shall possess, Thou dost glorify through Thy spirit, O Lord, Who art evermore the same.

"I conceived of Thee, O Wise One, in my thought, that Thou art Father of Good Thought, for so I apprehended Thee with my own eye, that Thou didst truly create Right, and art the Lord to judge the deeds of life." Here Prof. Moulton says: "Thoughts lofty as these could not express themselves in language that fell short of Poetry."

Whereas in the Gáthás we have this element predominant, in the versified prose of the Later Avesta we get so many romances on individual Angels and Archangels. The step from the older into the epic songs of the Yashts is a step into





Ganj Nameh-e Hamadan showing rock-inscriptions. A modern Persian hunter in the foreground

a new region altogether. Everything is different in the two—the dialect, thoughts, principles, music all is changed, as the work of ages intervened between them. Even the Prophet is depicted differently in the two stages,

Again, the ideas are also changed regarding His theology in the later writings. He Himself is a supernatural figure and His religion is *degraded* being reduced to a form of *Dualism*. But that the Avesta Religion is *not* dualistic, we have ample testimony to prove in the Gáthic poetry. Dr. Haug, the late Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology in the Deccan College, put it clearly thus: "His real doctrines, untouched by the speculations of later ages can be learned only from the older Yasna, chiefly from the Gáthás. The leading idea of His theology was monotheism, *i.e.*, there are not many Gods but only one; and the principle of his speculative philosophy was Dualism, *i.e.*, the supposition of two primæval causes of the real world and the intellectual; while His moral philosophy was moving in the triad of thought, word and deed." After the expiration of the later Yasna period, as another writer observes, had Zoroaster come back awhile to this world, He would have had to resume His work over again!

### The Prosaic Period

Coming to the Old Persian Stage of the Avesta Literature, we note almost the total absence of Poetry. The Achæmenian Dynasty had its language quite peculiar to itself. The Avesta tongue was long forgotten and with that, there were also changes in the religious notions of Persia. But Ahura Mazda still retained His Kingdom with Sovereigns like Cyrus and Darius, whose glory and splendour still are prominent in the Bahistan Rocks in the Cuneiform Inscriptions, for the first time interpreted by Sir W. Rawlinson. The close affinity of these Rock Records to the Avesta strikes any philologist

researcher and they remove once for all the doubt about the genuineness of the Zend-Avesta. The Achæmenian period of Old Persia marks also the Angustan age of Zoroastrian Literature. The Greek Invasion under Alexander, who appeared at the end of the dynasty, is said to have dealt a death-blow to Persia's literature, and with the burning of Persepolis, the sacred Encyclopædia there in the archives was also reduced to ashes. The other copy, the Dez-i Napisht was supposed to have fallen into the hands of Arumans (Armenians), possibly Greeks, and was translated into the Ionian language. We have therefore no records left here to show whether the poetic element was developed in that period, and even the engraved letters on the Behistan rocks were for a long time considered to be an "Ornamental work."

The *Interregnum* from the conquest of Alexander to the restoration of the Sassanian house was long enough to make matters worse still, and the only part of the old writings which remained was that remembered by the priests for ceremonial purposes and the verses committed to memory and handed down to posterity by word of mouth.

### The Revival of Letters

But with the coming of the Sâssânian period in Persia, we have once more an earnest attempt made to gather together the fragments of the Avesta and to translate the same into the then current tongue, Pahlavi. New matter was also added and we have the Kárnâmak of Ardeshir Báhegân who took the most prominent part in this Avestan Renaissance. Then King Shâpur I. made another collection of different profane sciences, while Shâpur II. tried to prove the superiority of the religion of Zarthost. Later on, Ádarbâd Mârâspand actually underwent a fire-ordeal, in which the people saw "the revelation on earth" with their own eyes. But the Pahlavi dialect of Persia is ambiguous

in the highest degree and the method of writing is very cumbrous. The little that was thus revived lost its charms, and even by some the language was branded as "an art of concealing thought" and "a unique philological puzzle."

The middle Persian or Pahlavi rapidly fell into disuse, and after the Arab conquest, when a *coup de grace* was finally dealt with to the literature of Persia, a new language was introduced. Modern Persian, though derived from old Persian, is not without a mixture of Arabic and Turkish elements in them. This recent stage has in it the reflexions of all that has preceded it. In the mouth of the Persian bard traditions of various ages find a ready vehicle of expression. The first Persian couplet is supposed to be the joint invention of Beherâmgore the Sâssânian and his Dilâráh in 420 A.D. As Shakespeare began Modern English in his poetry, so poets like Rudagi began Modern Persian.

### A Parsee Epic

But the national legend of Persia found its ultimate development in the great Parsee Epic the Sháh Náneh, or the Book of Kings. It is an unusually long poem containing some 60,000 couplets, composed by Firdousi Tusi who published it after nearly forty years of hard work in the year 1010 A.D. The Sháh Náneh is a unique poetic work of Persia; its author was at heart a true Persian. The entire Persian History which was tossed in dark oblivion by his very race in Irân, survived at the hands of this great patriotic singer, and the name and fame of many a Persian hero are immortalised by him in the pages of this only Parsee Epic, written in an elegant yet stirring pure Persian style. The epic element, which remained in embryo in the Yashts and Nyaishes of the later Avesta epoch, finds herein the fullest and most appropriate expression.



### **Avesta Prosody in general**

We now come to the subject of Avesta Prosody. "Few subjects," observes Prof. Moulton, "are more overladen with technicalities and more obstinate, when one would rouse the interest of the general reader than that of the *metre*, especially as developed by modern scientific study." The modern student therefore should find in the religious Poetry of Persia an elementary prosody. Verse-making in the Avesta chiefly consists in the numbering of syllables and the placing of the caesura at a convenient point in the line, while there is the total absence of quality or long and short measures or accents. At the most there are three main accents in the octosyllabic verses of the Yashts, but only one caesura in the Gáthic compositions of verses of eleven syllables generally. In short, "the student of Avestan prosody has only to count and not to weigh." But one point appears to be very prominent in this Poetry, and that is fixed tunes or chants which made the verses run smoothly and enabled even the priests, ignorant of their scansion or composition, to keep them in memory.

Ignorance of the laws of scansion had also kept students of the Avesta for a considerable period in darkness whether a particular passage was prose or verse. But the efforts of Geldner, Mayr and other youthful savants yielded rich crops of Avestan poetry not only from the Gáthás but also from the Yashts. A considerable portion of these later writings is pure poetry but invariably welded together with prose interpolations of commentators and scribes.

Again the Avesta Prosody is not so very elementary in form; there are several specimens of rhymed passages detected by Mgr. Baron C. De Harlez:

“Yenghe nmânem vârethraghni  
 Hazanghrô stûnem vidhâtem,  
 Barezishte paiti barezahi  
 Haraithyô paiti barezayâô,  
 Khâraokshnem antara naemât,  
 Stehrpaesem nishlara naemât,  
 Yenghe Ahunô Vairyô  
 Snaithish visata verethrajâô.”

(Yasna Ch. LVII).

“Á cha nô jamyât avanghê  
 Á cha nô jamyât ravanghê  
 Á cha nô jamyât rafnanghê  
 Á cha nô jamyât marzdikâi  
 Á cha nô jamyât ashavastâi  
 Á cha nô jamyât verethraghnâi  
 Á cha nô jamyât havanghâi  
 Á cha nô jamyât ashavastâi.”

(Yasht X).

The Student will also find some resemblance between the metre of the Vedás and that of the Gáthás. Although in dialect the Gáthic hymns resemble more the Rig Veda, in metre and in ideas the Yashts stand nearer to it than the Gáthás. Undoubtedly the polished songs of the Rig Veda belong to “a more advanced stage of literary evolution,” and so we do not generally find in the Avesta a great variety of sentiment, wealth of imagination, and magnificence of images. The style of the Avesta remains rather simple and natural, as we know the Avesta bards wrote more for the demands of worship and legislation. And yet we do not altogether miss in the Yashts at least “that grandeur of imagery and that loftiness of thought which are the witnesses to a true inspiration.” For the sake of comparison we offer to the student “The Hymn to the Sun” (Rig Veda), “The Khorshed Nyáish” (Avesta) and the “Psalm” of

the Christians. The Gáthás, the verses of the Haptan Yasht and to some extent the Old Persian of the Inscriptions differ from the Vedas in one chief feature and that is the artificial emphasis on the last final vowel, unlike the Sanskrit.

### Poetry of the Five Gáthás

The term "Gáthá" means Song, and is derived from the Avesta root 'gâ' to sing. Even the Greek writers concur in the view "that the Gáthás were sung and solemnly recited in a fine tune made out of the metrical compositions of those ancient times." These sacred Songs are five in number and seem to have been compiled by a later priest in the present form. They contain the best sayings and preachings of Prophet Zoroaster and the matter is mostly philosophical. In their purest form they present "a thumb-nail sketch of the great Prophet of Irán, which is sufficient to impress the mind with the grandeur of the personality without alluring it by wealth of biographical details from the teaching to the teacher." They are composed in blank verse and their metres are similar to those of the Vedic hymns of the Hindus. Dr. Haug too contends that the Gáthás form a digest of the bigger hymns which once existed in a large number and thus compares them to the Sámaveda. Geldner says that they are verses scattered about in narrative prose which is to-day lost, that they are meant for summary work and oral transmission in a condensed form, while Bartholomae calls them only versified sermons. There are other savants who find in them so many mnemonic lines meant only for the chosen few. While thus there is a diversity of opinion as to the literary estimates of this part of ancient Persian poetry, we have reasons to believe that the Gáthás, if *rearranged* properly, form an Epic of the primitive character or epic of growth. According to Aristotle, the essentials of an epic poem are (1) A dignified theme, (2) organic unity, and (3) an orderly progress of the action,

all of which can be easily discovered in the Gáthás round about the central figure of the Prophet Himself. Again, "the hymns do not strike us as being superior to modern productions, but then they were produced by ideas that were the mothers of our own. From nowhere else at their period have compositions so deeply moral and intellectually religious come down to us. The Prophets of Israel surpass Zoroaster indefinitely in the splendour of their rhetoric, but few of them approach him in the grasp and refinement of his distinctions." Such are the views held by the greatest authority now living on the Gáthás, Dr. Mills, after years of study. He has put for us into English verse some of the best thoughts originally expressed in the sacred tongue and yet has tried to preserve their sweet melody thus:

"Yes, I would circle  
 You with praises, Mazda,  
 With hands lift high  
 And chants from Asha's tome,  
 With ritual truth, and gift  
 Of off'rer's homage,  
 And with 'Thy saints' inspired  
 Skill would I come!"

(Gáthás L.)

The reader will get an idea of this poetry of the several Gáthás from the following account:—

The First Gáthá Ahunavaiti contains seven chapters with verses of three lines each containing 16 syllables with the caesura at the end of the 7th. According to Dr. Haug, this metre is very near the Gâyatri metre of the Sanskrit Shlokas. Here in these seven songs we learn all that was revealed to Zoroaster while he remained in a state of ecstasy and extreme happiness. Here too we have an account of the Call of Zoroaster and his appointment as a Reformer, together

with the metrical speech delivered by him to an assembly of his countrymen in which he persuaded them all to embrace the Good Law of the One God.

The Second Gáthá called Ushtavaiti—the most striking and important of all—contains a glowing account of the Prophet's own life, the nature of his Mission, his acquisition of wordly as well as spiritual knowledge, his Conference and final fate. There are four chapters in this hymn, each containing verses of five lines, each line consisting of 11 syllables with the caesura after the 4th. This metre is nearly equal to the Sk. Trishtup.

In the third Spento Mainyu Gáthá the metre is pure Trishtup, as each verse there comprises four Padas, each of 11 syllables, in all 44. In the four chapters that we get in this hymn we have a mere collection of detached verses signifying Hopes of Victory or Defeat according to deeds done in the body, with the crowning stanza on *Asha, the Only Hope*.

In the single chapter of the Fourth Gáthá called Vohukshathra, Zoroaster gives us "True Hopes and Guides," as the gift of gifts called the "Desirable Realm." It has its stanzas of three verses, each verse containing 14 syllables with the caesura in the middle. Some of these verses are supposed to have been composed by the Prophet's nearest disciples.

The Last Gáthá Vahishtoyasht is a Marriage Song sung in honour of his daughter and contains verses of four lines with two half lines. Pro. Darmesteter thus arranges its metre: The first two are similar in Padas and have  $7 + 5 = 12$  with the caesura at the end of the 7th. The second two have  $7 + 7 + 5 = 19$  Padas with the caesura after the 7th. Thus we have the arrangement: 2 (7 + 5); 2 (7 + 7 + 5).

### **The Truth about the Gáthas**

In these Chapters or Hás there is much heterogeneous material put together without any order or relation. One is thereby tempted to doubt even the authenticity of the Gáthás and their Author. Besides, there are passages in which, instead of the first person, the third is used, and this leads some scholars to believe that they must have been composed by another sage altogether, and some to assert that Zoroaster refers to Himself, about seven times in the Hymns, in the third person as in most Oriental languages. Moreover, it appears that some Dasturán Dastur of a later generation while re-editing the Gáthás gave them this structure and unity according to his own plan aided by their metre. He saw perhaps in one place expressions of confidence and hope and grouped them together and in another he found struggling and anxiety and put the matter in one book-form as though they were composed at a particular time in the Prophet's career. Then also he placed some Hás according to the nature of His preachings in the form of a Sermon, while the tone and subject-matter of another Gáthá suggested to him the idea of grouping it in the shape of a marriage song. Yet, in this last, there are stanzas which are serious in nature and make the whole song virtually a sombre one. Thus Pouruchistá answers the call of her Father :

“I will love and vie with him when from father he takes me ;  
For the master and the peasants and for the blood kinsman,  
For the pure and the pure ones be the Good Mind's bright  
blessing ;  
And mine be the insight ;  
May Ahura bestow it, for the Good Faith's advancing,  
For time without end !”

As to their relative ages, Dr. Mills concludes :

“The poet himself would file them into better order at each subsequent delivery ; and verses, which referred originally to one

period of time, would, if especially striking, be reproduced in subsequent effusions."

### **Their Merits**

It is worth pausing here to consider what general benefit has been derived from these epical fragments and how nobly the Author has elevated millions of mankind through this divine illumination. To say the least, we have in them a strain of spiritual uplift, guiding the human race along the Noble Path and towards the positive Pole or the Pole of higher and higher potential, the home of bliss and light. To have a portraiture of the Prophet, from these verses, as one who standing on the Iranian Sinai holds an "almost visible communion" with the Maker, who declares in gladness the ultimate success of the pure in heart, who adorns a remote antiquity with His personal charms, is indeed a great privilege. In Him again the skill of a singer like Milton, the genius of a hero like Carlyle, the depth of a poet like Tennyson and the foresight of a philosopher like Plato may be found all happily commingled. Here and there, there are high pitches of rhetoric alongside rare pages of pathos; while hope like a gleaming taper constantly cheers his way in life. His too is the poetry of nature and He refers to auroras and noontides, stars and suns, wind and waters. In short, there is little room in his religious songs for passionate emotion or wild enthusiasm, but great scope for divine contemplation. In his many musings there are "no revolting pictures of after horrors at all."

### **The Yasna Haptanghâiti**

The Haptan Yasht is properly speaking a complement of the Metrical Gâthás, and includes chapters on the power of *Ātash*, fire-ordeals, treatment of the earth and glorification of

heavenly spirits. It is a text of unique character and belongs to the middle Avesta stage, while the thoughts and expressions are much simpler than those in the Hymns. The 'Yazamaide' formulæ are for the first time met with here, while there is an occasional reference to the bountiful Farohars in the 37th Chapter. Though we distinctly find the usual eight syllabic metre in Ch. 40 (*vide* The Common Prayer, lines 110–114), Prof. Geldner remarks: "The Seven-Chapter-Yasna is, with a few exceptions, *prose*; although tradition following the analogy of the Yasnas proper has divided it into strophes (*vichast*) and metrical lines (*gâs*)."

### A Poetic Contrast

Whereas in the Gáthic verses we have different groups of Trishtup, Gâyatri and other Sanskrit metres, in the later Avesta writings the metrical system is much simpler and almost uniform. There the lines are octo-syllabic verses, lengthened sometimes into 12, with no other variety than in the length of stanzas of 3, 4, or 5 lines. Also, instead of the pure Gáthá poetry, in the Yashts and the Nyaishes, and also the Vendidâd and the Visparad, we discover a mixture of prose and verse, sometimes versified prose, the verse indicating the kernels or mnemonic lines committed to memory and passed on from generation to generation, and the prose inserted probably at a later stage by way of explanations, completions, or commentaries wherever the original text was found defective. In a word, while the character of the older Yasna is generally reflective, that of the later is descriptive or ethical. There is melody in one, while the other betrays itself by its unmetrical form and crude grammar. "Priests and theologians, and lovers of national folklore could add their glosses to the less venerated poems without hindrance and the glosses might often extend beyond the bulk of the original."



### The Poetic Portion of the Vendidad

In the Vendidad, the Leviticus or the Smritis of the Parsees, we have prose greater in amount than poetry, the latter set mostly as an ornament in narrations here and there. In the 2nd Fargard we are given a poetic version of the legend of Yima (Jamshed) and his Vara (*Cf.* Noah's Arc). The first part of the 3rd Vendidad contains prose; then after the 24th paragraph there suddenly comes a pleasant account of the blessings of agriculture in verse form. In this manner, we have, in this Nask, prose interspersed with verse. Even there are passages which show if not actual verses, at least "the parallelism of form and meaning," which is the foundation of verse and a stepping stone towards it. Prof. Cowell puts the 32nd paragraph in this "Pittacus Song":—

"At the sight of the barley the demons sweat;  
At the sight of the fan the demons cough;  
At the sight of the millstone the demons greet;  
At the sight of the doughcake the demons are off.  
The demons he sends in haste away:  
From the house of the doughcake scared they fly,  
They scorch their jaws, they cannot stay,  
Where the barley storeheaps multiply."

We should very much like to have the whole of the Vendidad re-written in the plan thus presented by Pro. Moulton in his valuable work "Early Religious Poetry of Persia." This would surely enhance the literary value of the Book.

### The Poets of the Yashts

The Yashts are compared to the Puranic literature of the Hindus. They are metrical pieces, but greatly deranged, as is seen from the literary history of Persia given above. They represent "the fragments of the ancient Epic poetry of the Iranian gods, in the mouths of the bards," and are much inferior to the productions of the former age. There is a clue in an octo-

syllabic stanza of five lines (*viz.*, Sarosh Yasht 22), to the precedence of portions of Avesta literature. It can be thus translated: 'Whose (Sraosha's) successful weapon Ahunavar admitted to be; also the Haptan Yasht, Fshush Mánthra and all the Yazishn Kardás.' This shows that they were composed long before this Yasht. The poets of the Yashts are artificial composers, and their style is clear, uniform and simple. No doubt there are 'honourable exceptions' in some of the beautifully conceived passages, but on the whole the material is descriptive folklore. The prose insertions are records of places and heroes, long lists of epithets, descriptions and habitations. There is a good deal of monotonous repetitions also. The metre too is uniform and regular, *e.g.*, in the Meher Yasht there are stanzas of four and five lines alternately arranged as in the Vedic Anushtubh and Pankti metres. According to Geldner, a true Yasht has "a division into cantos with a fixed introduction and a refrain." Thus the Aván, Tir, Gosh, Meher, Farvardin, Beherám, Rám, Din, Ashi, Jamyád and Sarosh Yashts are marked out as poetic pieces. No doubt there are fragments scattered up and down in the other Yashts too: Thus in the Ardibahešt Yasht we have the folklore about the fallen Fiend :—

"Headlong down from heaven fell he,  
He of demons the most lying,  
Angra Mainyu many-slaying."

The region of Yashts as is already observed is foreign to the totally human atmosphere of the Ushtavaiti:

"Thus she spake then, the good *Ashi*,  
She the lofty one, 'come nearer,  
True and holy Zarathushtra,  
Lean thee here against my chariot.'"

The fifth Yasht, Áván, is a typical instance of verses throughout, and contains many pictorial details, descriptive decorations, etc., like

"Bound the diadem upon her,  
 Hundred-starred it was and golden,  
 Doubly quartered, wheel shaped, splendid,  
 Streamer-decked, full—spreading, shapely."

In another place, Mithra, the Angel of Light is given a unique abode up the Mountain Haraberezaiti:—

"For him Mazdah the creator  
 Reared a palace on the Mountain,  
 Alburz, with its hills encircled,  
 Glorious, where nor night nor darkness  
 Climbs, nor blows the chill, the searching  
 Wind, nor sickness comes death-dealing."

(Moulton).

A reference more to Homa Frâshmi in the Sarosh Yasht and we have done:

Truth-telling *he* and utt'ring  
 Words both warning, saving;  
 So also acting up to Laws  
 Of wisdom and excelling Manthras.

Thus sang the poets of the Avestan ages and they sang so faithfully. Through these and similar songs of yore the creed of Zarathushtra teaches but one ideal of righteousness, to be attained not by meditation in the lonely cellar of an ascetic but worked out by ourselves amidst the turmoils of this very world. "Work is worship" is second only to our motto of "Good thoughts, words and deeds." Upon purity and upon light our ancient religion is based; we are thereby to purge ourselves of the uncleanness we meet with in the world, by divine illumination and with steady steps are to

"Soar to the place of Everlasting Light  
 Ahura Mazdah's boundless House of Song,"

and ultimately to be *at one* with Him, who is the only Lord of the Gáthic psalms.

BOOK 7

SCIENCE IN ANCIENT IRÁN



# Science in Ancient Iran

---

## The Mission of Science

Science means profound or complete knowledge. "Science" says Dr. Paul Carus, "is the methodical search for truth; and truth is a correct, exhaustive, concise statement of facts." The history of several countries show that where science flourishes, religion declines. People get easily enchanted with the marvels of modern science. In their enthusiasm to conduct the lightning and raise lofty spires, in their zeal to find out the 'philosopher's stone' and analyse the stars, they unconsciously overlook religion and question even the validity of the statements made in old scriptures. They have invented a machine to talk over long, long distances and have bottled up the human voice with marvellous effect. They have transformed the loom into the electric mill and are even ready to fly up in the air. But in the manufacture of men and women—the best and the highest instruments of progress—the same old recipes have been made use of by mankind for so many years. There appears to be no mission attached to the birth of man and no higher object than to be merry and pass away as though nothing had happened. There is enough food for the body, while little is offered to the *soul*. But the same Doctor observes: "Every religion is or should be a conviction that regulates man's conduct, affords comfort in affliction and consecrates all the purposes of life." Naturally the question arises: "Is there any science in religion or what is the science of religion? How far does religion help the mighty progress of science?" The answer is this: If religion is God's revelation in the written Word, or the Scriptures, science is His revelation inscribed in the flowers, the rivers and the stars. In the science laboratories and other research

institutions we are engaged in finding out the laws and principles by which nature is ordained from time out of mind. This is one sort of progress, progress which starting from below upwards goes to solve the problems of human life in the world. But there issues from that other corner a line of progress in the opposite direction, from above downwards, progress that is of revelation and divine philosophy. And when these two will meet, we shall be glad to find revelation and science going hand in hand. The more therefore we learn of nature and her laws, the greater must be our reverence for God and His laws laid down in the holy Scriptures.

### Science in Iran

It is a mistake to suppose that classic Persia neglected altogether the affairs of nature and of the world, and that too much heed was paid to matters spiritual and metaphysical. True, Persia built up her society on the model of nature. It was on the top of this that she raised her house of philosophy and spirituality.

In this book we shall try to apply the touchstone of Science to the religion of Irán and see whether we can discover in that ancient land any ideas and works resembling those of the present age. In the preface to that charming volume of verses Aristo's "Zoroaster," there is an interesting statement made: "The most reliable testimony seems to leave little doubt that Zoroaster *lived* and lived probably between 1,000 and 2,000 B.C., that much of his life was passed in solitude—it is supposed in Bactria—that he was acquainted with astronomy and acquired some knowledge of electricity, and after many years of meditation taught a religion, which for pure and lofty humanitarianism seems unsurpassed." An attempt is made therefore to cull from the Zend-Avesta some ideas and practices to compare with modern scientific thoughts and to argue

whether we can read modern science in those old-world sayings, though we know that there have been considerable changes made in the progress of human beings since those early days.

### The Energy of Fire

In the science of Physics, energy is a general term applied to sound, heat, light, electricity, etc. Generally all these forms of energy are ultimately turned into heat-energy. If we rub two pieces of wood or metal, heat is the result. Light and electricity are higher forms of heat. It is therefore clear why fire, which is all life, should be greatly admired by the followers of Zoroaster. Fire is a simple word spelt in four letters, but in its meaning it spells the whole of our *active* world. There is an endless volume in that monosyllabic word; its mere mention is enough to create awe and to fill the minds of those who come under its charms, with purity. Fire conveys in the best possible form the idea of the law of Conservation of Energy, of what is represented by the Living Element, signified by the name Ahura. Fire is therefore a pure and simple representative of Ahura Mazda in this corporeal world. It is thus best expressed in the later Avesta as Puthra or the son of Ormuzd. The Parsees are then called Fire-worshippers only to confirm their own title of the worshippers of the only Lord of all. In the Haptan Yasht we recite thus:

“Happy is the man to whom Thou comest, O Fire! Thou art acquainted with Ahura Mazda, with the heavenly. O Fire! we draw near to Thee with good mind and with deeds and words of good wisdom. Through the agency of Thy Living Element, O Mazda! approach we Thee alone.” In our case, therefore Fire only is a means to an end. For it brings us into closer and closer contact with nature and relationship to the Almighty.



The sacred Fire is mentioned with rare respect in the Gáthic hymns and is considered to be a good and health-giving element among the creations of Ahura Mazda. The natural condition of ancient Persia also contributed much towards Ancient Iranians' reverence for this element. Although geologically it is a *terra incognita*, its physical features are prominent, inasmuch as it is essentially a mountainous country. Besides the edges of the table-land are everywhere higher than the interior; so that the whole remains a shallow basin with no rivers flowing down into the sea. Naturally the place becomes exceptionally hot in summer, and cold in winter. Winter again in the northern regions is longer than summer. Besides the volcanic regions of higher elevation display the powerful effects of the internal heat of the earth. Under these circumstances it is natural that fire and heat were considered by Iránians as sacred and held in reverence by them. Heat in fact is the life and soul of everything. Life is granted by God to man in order to enjoy the *heat* of His bounty and to bless His name.

What has fire in store for its worthy devotees? We are told in the Átash Nyâish that fire can bestow upon its "friends and admirers long and healthy life, strength of body, sharp-mindedness, and above all, that best of happiness in the world to come,"—blessings perhaps similar in nature to those so generously bestowed upon man by the electricity of Michael Faraday.

Fire teaches mankind to be always active. There is therefore no room for asceticism in Zoroastrianism; for asceticism is negativism. We are always to learn to make the best use of the life that Ahura has given us. This is the true meaning of Fire-worship.

### The Manthraic Theory

The Theory of sound in Physical Science has proved for us that certain vibrations are always produced when words

are spoken or when any sound is made. The vibrations again produce some effect on the surrounding bodies. When these are for the betterment of the object acted upon, the art is white, and when the effect is injurious or the aim selfish, it is black. It is the former white art that we have to deal with, when we talk of Avesta prayers. The word "Magic" is derived from the Greek **Mageia**, the rites of the Persian **Mági**. These last show the powerful enchantment of the ancient priests, who could perform wonders by reciting some of the religious verses. On diseases, these words of the **Mági** had a powerful effect, more powerful, at times, than any of the world's drugs and healers. Even to-day, the old Hindu astrologers on the Gujarát side recommend, on certain diseases, some suitable recitations from the Avesta. This **Tilsamé Zarthost** has for their possessors a sort of treasure even in these days of civilisation and progress, if only the words are pronounced *correctly*.

There is quite a long note in the **Ardibahesht Yasht** regarding this **Mánthra-Spenta** healer or the healer by means of chants of holy words.

### Theory of Light

In hints on Avesta prayers we are told to recite the two **Nyáishes** of **Khorshed** and **Meher** always together. In fact these go hand in hand and prove that the one entirely depends upon the other. The science of Optics has shewn that light consists in the emission of very small particles, called corpuscles, from the burning body. The later and more satisfactory Theory of Undulation proves that light is transmitted, through the ethereal region, by waves produced in the ether of space. Now, **Khorshed** is but the Sun, and **Meher** or **Mithra** is supposed to be the helper. If we, then, think deep into this matter, we shall be led to suppose that these two angels represent the two essentials of light, one the body burning, and the other the ejected particles or the ether vibrations.

### **Avesta Gâhs and Iranian Latitudes**

Whereas in the later Avesta we find the five convenient divisions or Gâhs of a day for places situated near the tropics, in the old Gâthic Avesta only three of them are remembered *viz*, morn, noon and night, thus pointing out the situation of the old Home of the Avesta period further towards the North and therefore near the polar region, where one finds the Sun rising and setting in a way different from that at the equator. Again, in the Vendidad, Winter is described in its most terrible aspect, and at times more months are prescribed for the cold weather than for the other seasons.

Comparing the term "Gâh" with the word "Gâthâ," we can argue that in the beginning the practice was of chanting the Gâthâs at different fixed periods during the day of twenty-four hours. Later on, special songs were composed for these five periods or Gâhs and they are the Hâvan, the Rapithvan, the Uziran, the Aiwisruthrem and the Ushahin. The altitude of the sun could be conveniently marked at three points and we have the first three Gâhs; the period of the night was arbitrarily divided into the dark half and "the first grey of morn." Prayers during this last period produced a wholesome effect upon the minds of the reciter.

### **Heavenly Bodies.**

Some of the most prominent heavenly bodies, shining in the azure-vault of the heavens, have been mentioned in the Avesta and described as Tishtar or the Star Sirius in the Tishtar Yasht, Haptoiring or the Constellation Great Bear in the Farvardin Yasht and Dravâspa or the Milky Way, described "as one having many spies (eyes), having light of her own, having a far way and a long constellation" in the Gosh Yasht.

In the Bundahishn too we have occasional references to astronomical terms such as Mt. Taera the Greenwich of the Avesta, etc. In the later Avesta period, both Astronomy and

Astrology seem to have played their parts. The whole of the Nirangdin ceremony bespeaks the Iranians' faith in the heirarchy of God; the entire Zodiacal system is supposed to have been represented in the rites of the Nirangdin. So far back as 1806 Moore sang of a Parsee religious ceremonial while describing some deserted spots in his story of "Fire Worshippers." :—

" No longer on those mouldering towers  
Was seen the feast of fruits and flowers,  
With which of old the Magi fed  
The wandering Spirits of their Dead ;  
Though neither priest nor rites were there,  
Nor charmed leaf of pure pomegranate ;  
Nor hymn, nor censer's fragrant air,  
*Nor symbol of their worshipp'd planet."*

As to Astrology, Jámásp Hakim is said to have made a forecast of 5000 years.

### **Equinoxes**

The two equinoctial points in the orbit or path of the earth, during its Revolution round the Sun are those where the days and nights are of equal hours. The one, called Vernal Equinox, is the same as our Jamshedi Naoroz day, which King Jamshed of old had fixed as the new year's day in his time. Even to-day we find in Persia and other places people making a jubilee of it. This is "the birth day of the sun" and so we have the day of merriment or the Jashan holiday, which is properly speaking the first day Hormazd of the first month Farvardin. It is therefore that a proposal is made to celebrate the Parsee New Year's Day on the Jamshedi Naoroz, i.e., 21st of March, after the reform in the Zoroastrian calendar by the Fasti Sâl Mandal.

### **Seasons and Nature Study**

There are Jashan days called Gahambárs, which have some reference to the divisions of the whole year into seasons.

In the first chapter of the Visparad we have an account of the five chief seasons of the year (*vide* p. 77.)

The story of Seasons and Gahambárs (*Common Feasts*) in the Zend-Avesta exactly illustrates the following thoughts from Poet Thomson :

“These, as they change, Almighty Father, these  
 Are but the varied God. The rolling year  
 Is full of Thee. Forth in the pleasing Spring  
 Thy beauty walks, Thy tenderness and love.  
 Then comes Thy glory in the Summer months,  
 With light and heat refulgent. Then Thy sun  
 Shoots full protection through the swelling year  
 And oft Thy voice in dreadful thunder speaks  
 And oft as dawn, deep moon or falling eve,  
 By brooks and grooves in hollow whispering gales  
 Thy bounty shines in Autumn unconfined  
 And spreads a *common feast* for all that live.”

The religion of Zoroaster always brings us into close contact with nature. As we have to respectfully remember the five Gâhs of a day, so do we praise the sun, the moon, the stars and other heavenly bodies, which co-operate with the earth (Hamâjor). The various divisions of the earth into mountains, seas, lakes, rivers are said to work for the seven Keshwars in unison. Trees and vegetations (Av. urvarâô) are not forgotten. In fact all the natural objects form one harmonious whole and exert their joint influence upon the creation of Ahura. Even we belong to the same creed to which the waters, the vegetations, etc., belong (*vide* Song No. 4.)

### **Agriculture and Irrigation**

The fact that the ancient Persians were mostly agricultural people shows how they were a settled race and loved practical work, instead of longing to eat the bread of idleness and misery.

The ancient people of Irán instead of preaching asceticism were engaged in this best and noblest of all pursuits, the tilling of the raw soil and producing fruits therefrom. Up and down the Zend-Avesta books we have references made to practicality, and Agriculture formed the most suitable profession. Manual work was no degradation at all to our Iránian fathers. Nay, it was considered *a meritorious deed to till the soil* according to the third Fargard of the Vendidad. Even the Yazads are pleased and the genius of the earth is rejoiced thereby. The Vendidad tells us, in a lucid and beautiful composition, about the joys and sufferings of the Earth, the methods of cultivation and husbandry, and the great delight which it gives both to the tiller and the earth. With a simile Ahura answers the question put to him by Zarathushtra: "That land cultivable by a farmer, if left untilled, is never appeased. She is disappointed to such an extent as is a beautiful woman left barren in this world."

The state law compelled the Iranians to be diligent and to grow corn. If they cultivated the soil they would reap good fruits; if they left it barren, they would become starving beggars.

In the later Avestaic period, agriculture was highly developed, irrigation freely practised and the rigour of the soil and climatic conditions was slowly mitigated. There are three pursuits pointed out in the Fargard: (1) watering, (2) ploughing up and ploughing down from left to right and right to left and (3) filling up hollows and digging out elevations. Through artificial ducts or canals water was economically supplied to the most interior parts. This was followed by the sowing of seeds and corn and then the work of covering them with earth. We gather that a large number of useful plants and trees and even medicinal plants were known to the old Persian agriculturists.

Even at present the Zoroastrians of Yezd and Kermán are good agriculturists. The district of Zerafshan is most fertile and husbandry is at its best there. The Parsees in India had first begun to live on agriculture alone.

## Vegetable Kingdom

A curious explanation is given in the 27th chapter of the Bundahishn, that, before the coming of Ahriman in the world, vegetation had no thorn, or bark about it. There also are mentioned fifty-five species of grain, twenty-five species of medicinal plants, 10,000 species of principal plants, and 1,000,000 ordinary plants. The Homa plant, which is the same as Soma in Sanskrit, is the chief of all and is described as one expelling death. It was supposed to give immortality to the user. Its juice was extracted with some ceremony (Homa Yasht) and drunk as a *vegetable tonic*.

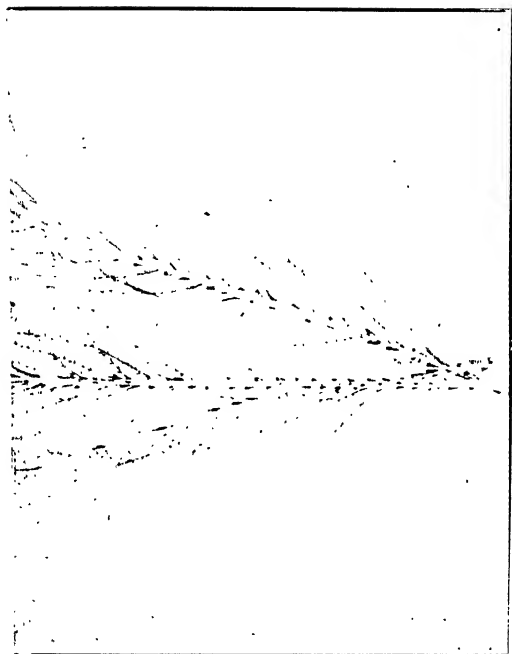
"There are many stories current," says Dr. Hang, "in ancient times about the miraculous effects of the drinking of the Homa juice (a panacea for all diseases) which lead to the belief that the performance of the ceremony of the angel Homa proves highly beneficial to body and soul."

Another plant called the Barsom (Av. Baresma) is also mentioned in connection with the Yazishn ceremony. The bundle of twigs in certain numbers was indispensable at the time of the great sacrificial rites. As there are no Homa and Barsam plants met with in India, the priests use the pomegranate leaves and metal wires instead.

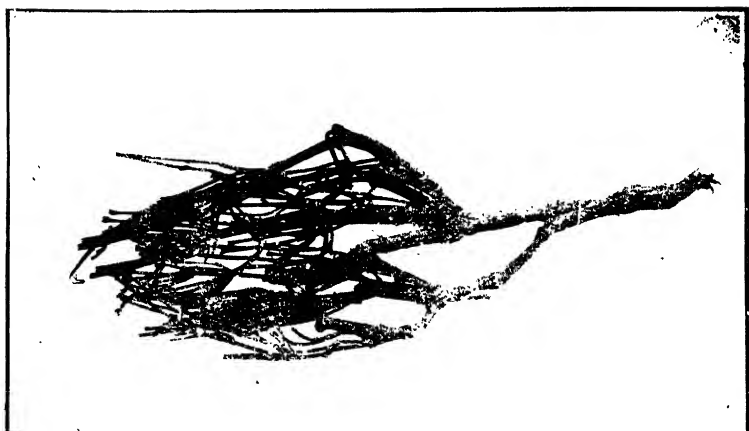
There are also thirty kinds of principal fruits mentioned in the Bundahishn. To each angel and archangel is appropriated a flower, e.g., the myrtle or jasmine for Ahura, the white jasmine for Vohumano, mouse-ear or sweet marjoram for Asha-vahishta, the basil-royal for Kshathravairya, the marigold for for Átash, the waterlily for Áván, and so on.

## Animal Kingdom

The various kinds of beasts and birds form an important part of the economic life of the people of the Avaistic age, inasmuch



Rare Twigs







as the ancient Iránians were tillers of the soil. From the earliest period, all kinds of domestic animals were highly praised and considered to be honest helpers of humanity at large. There is therefore no plea for cruelty to animals in the Avesta; but on the other hand there are certain creatures of God, which are held as "friends" of mankind. The ferocious beasts like tigers and lions are not referred to, but there is mentioned the wolf (*Avé veherka*) as the "most terrible enemy of grazing-cattle". To frighten away these unwelcome visitors to the precious fields, the farmers had frequently to take recourse to light, fire and smoke during the night.

No other reference is needed to show the kindness and love for lower animals expressed by the Iránians in those days than the fact that some proper nouns in the Avesta language are formed by compounding the names of useful animals, e.g., the name Zarathushtra is a compound of Zara = golden and Ushtra = camel; Kersáspa = having lean horses, Erzáspa = having ruddy horses, and so on.

Just next to man, in the animal kingdom, is mentioned the dog, a most useful and faithful animal companion. The words expressly are in the Vendidad: "I, Ahura Mazda, created the dog with keen scent and sharp teeth as a guard against enemies." It is because the dog took great care that no thieves or wolves attacked the cattle and killed them, that in the sacred book it is considered "a great sin to beat, wound or kill a dog." To the dog is also attributed the purifying power, the power of scaring away the evil spirit, and hence it is that it is thrice shewn to the dead body in the Gehsárna ceremony. "What a great contrast," writes Dr. W. Geiger, "between these precepts and the way in which dogs are now treated in Central Asia!"

Next in importance is the horse, esteemed by warriors so much that the metaphorical descriptions about angels and

archangels are seldom without the introduction of the riding horse therein. White is the symbol of purity and white horses consequently are considered sacred and as in Germany are highly valued. References are also made to horse-racing in those chivalrous days, while chariot-races were enjoyed by Vedic Indians as a sport.

No animal is more valued in the sandy deserts of Asia than the camel, which is even mentioned in the Gáthic hymns (XLIV, 18). A detailed description of this animal is, however, found in the Behráh Yasht, where it is said to be "load-bearing, swift-footed, strong-humped, gay-looking and courageous." "The power of far-seeing in the distance brings help to the team in the dark night, which tosses white foam about the neck in contentment."

"Parodarsh" the fore-seer is the name given to the cock, and the crowing of the cock in the early morning is just to chase away the devils of darkness, so that the Demon Bushyáspa of idleness may not attack the diligent early Iránian riser. The cock is also considered in the Avesta classics as the symbol of Resurrection.

Even the ass is marked as an useful animal, and a female ass is considered to be the doctor's fee for healing the wife of the patriarch. Sheep and goats are not forgotten, for of their wool are manufactured cloths to protect the Iránians in those cold regions of the North. The Kusti made of their wool and tied round the waist is to teach Iránians the lessons from the animal kingdom that they are to be as meek and quiet as lambs. The Varasia is the holy bull the Gaomez of which use is made in the Narangdin ceremony.

There is again the great serpent on whose back Keresáspa cooked his food, and which was afterwards killed by him. Azidaháka is a nickname of Afrásiab, and it shows how the term serpent connotes cruelty and malice.





**A well-to-do Zoroastrian merchant of Teherán**  
**Inset: An Iranian Zoroastrian family, showing typical**  
**Persian dress**

Among birds, vultures play an important part in disposing of the dead bodies in the Tower of Silence.

But the highest of Áhura's creatures are man and his companion woman. An ideal picture of both is given in Book 2, Song 17. Men in ancient Persia were of "high stature, strongly built, broad-chested and large and sharp-eyed." A boy at the age of fifteen was said to have entered manhood. Regarding the virtues of women, we shall quote stanzas 126—7 (Arđui Sura Yasht), where the female angel Arđui Sura "stands in the shape of an educated, beautiful, courageous, good-featured, high-clad, tall and noble-born virgin, verily carrying Barsam in her hands in proper proportion, having a four-cornered earring, also a fine necklace and a waist-band."

About the *position* of women in Irán much can be said. There is no degradation shown to them and no cruelty practised on them as in the case of other Asiatic races. The first step towards raising women on a high platform is to develop their mental and spiritual powers by the sound knowledge of morality and religion; and we find this principle thoroughly carried out in this case. We find the softer sex standing on an *equal* level with the sterner one and freedom in its most conducive sense was granted to these real helpers of mankind. Pious men and women are frequently named together in the Avesta. It is characteristic to find a maiden assuming on her marriage-day the title of "nmāno-pathni" or the female-head of the house, along with her husband, who was called "nmāno-paiti." Living together, they enjoyed the same common rights and pleasures both of this world and the next. Moreover, we find in the Zend-Avesta good spirits always in company with female Angels and Archangels. Good men and women of all the world are remembered in the Satum chapter.

Then we find pure and healthy aims of marriage, *e.g.*, "promotion of mankind, promotion of the Mazdayasnian faith

and the object of helping Frashakart on the Day of Renovation." Here are Tennyson's most glowing words in respect of such a union :—

"But were I joined with *her*,  
Then might we live together as one life,  
And reigning with one will in everything  
Have power on this dark land to lighten it,  
And power on this dead world to make it live."

In short, the ancient Iránians, who knew well the science of Education, gave good mothers to their country; in return, they expected good sons for it.

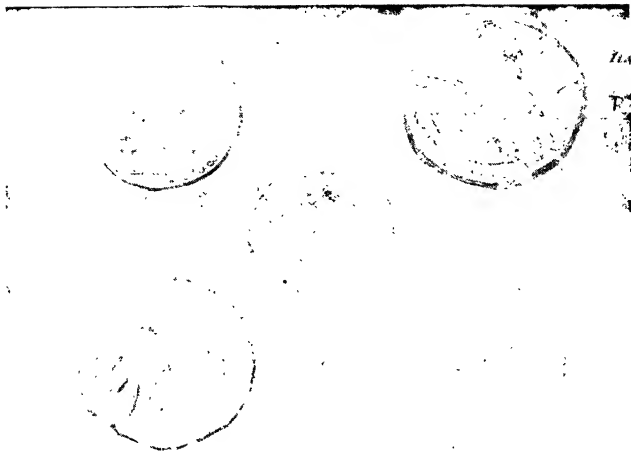
### Commercial and Industrial Pursuits

We see that the chief industrial pursuit of the old Iránians was agriculture, and this appears to be their chief profession for generations together. Scanty though the references regarding other industries are found in the Avesta, it is possible to mark out various manufacturing and industrial callings, which gave our Iránian fathers sufficient scope for manual work in those early days. In Vendidad VIII a long list of manufactures is given and there are mentioned the professions of potters, glaziers, goldsmiths, silversmiths, blacksmiths and bakers, all of whom are to use fire in their various kilns. To fire is given the greatest possible attention. The more it has been defiled by worldly uses, the greater is the merit acquired by freeing it from defilement. Thus a question is raised: "O Maker of the material world, Thou holy one! If a man bring to the sacred fire-place, the fire from under the puncheon of a worker in steel, what shall be his reward?" Ahura Mazda answers: "His reward shall be the same as if he had here below brought seventy-five brands to the Dâityo Gâtû." There are other varieties of Fire mentioned in the same chapter from which it is





## OLD PERSIAN COINS



Revers: Fire Altar. Obverse: Head of King Ardeshir, showing the Persian Helmet  
A gold Daric showing head of Darius the Great.

Obverse: Head of King Ardeshir. Facing him is the Helr-apparent Shapur with the Parthian helmet. Reverse: Fire Altar



HEAD OF SHAHPUR THE GREAT,  
showing well-arranged hair and peculiar  
head gear. (Bas relief)



HEAD OF VARAHRAN,  
Showing the Persian helmet. (Seal)

Taken from "Early Sassanian Inscriptions" by Edward Thomas

clear that there were many industries like pottery, etc., then in vogue.

Given the metals, the ancient Persians could prepare a few alloys, and we have instruments and ornaments made of gold, brass, silver, copper and lead. Ardui Sura is spoken of in the *Ávân Yasht* as "beautifully clad with golden shoes, with a golden crown, four-cornered ear-rings, a golden necklace and a girdle in the middle of her body. On her head is a diadem set with a hundred stars, golden and eight-sided, with garments of skin and fur of beavers, which have the most precious colours." All this picturesque description of the outward form and dress shows the kinds of arts prevalent in those days. Elsewhere we are also told about a throne with fine stuffed sweet-smelling pillows. There are chariots made of gold for Yazatas like Vayu and Mithra, as gold is spoken of with respect to divine beings and is the sign of affluence and splendour.

Arms and weapons were made of brass and bronze and we have the swords and the typical Gurz, resembling the head of a bull. Spinning and weaving were also arts possibly known to them, as there are robes made of fur for Anáhita and skirts of wool. For the rich we have the carriage and four, and carpets were spread for religious ceremonials. The art of pottery was not neglected, for cups and bowls were made for Haoma consecrations.

The system of barter was the prominent method of exchange with sheep and goats as mediums generally employed—circumstances similar perhaps to those of early Roman epochs. No definite mention is made with respect to coinage, but so early as the third century before the Christian era, the Parthian dynasty is known for its coins, which appear to be the oldest ever coined in Iránian land. Darius the Great is said to have struck the Daric, a gold coin of 130 grains. Silver too was stored in bullion at Susá, Persepolis and other places.

Carriage-building was an important occupation of the Iránians. There are two kinds of carriages mentioned, the *Ratha* or chariot and the *Vâsha* or waggon.

Dress-making and tailoring are other industries. Garments made of goat-hair and also animal skin were used. Embroidery is casually referred to in the description of the angel's dress in the *Ávân Yasht*.

The well-known metal work, carpets and fabrics of the Sassánian times are said to have influenced western art.

Information is, however, so scarce in the writings that it is difficult to show what instruments or apparatus they used for various pursuits.

### Hygiene and Health

If the creed of Zarathushtra indeed exercises a powerful influence upon the *practical* side of our life, it does so through its doctrine of purity of mind and body, upon which is based the edifice of the Zoroastrian code of health. In these days of infectious diseases in our country, the moral nature of our hygienic responsibilities must on no account be disregarded, when it is proved that filth in our neighbour's house is equally dangerous to ourselves. It is interesting to find that laws framed in the 19th and 20th centuries were long ago practised by our forefathers in ancient Irán and have still been preserved by us. When England and other countries of the West were passing through the phases of early civilisation, Persia in the East took the initiative and handed down to generations after certain principles for the conduct of daily life. Here are ten very important commandments that we come across in the health code of the *Avesta* :—

1. Thou shalt not speak while eating. This appears to be a minor health rule, but is none the less healthful. The saliva from one's mouth may contain injurious germs, which if thrown along

with food materials on the dining-table may spread the disease and put other persons to serious trouble. This is specially the case with one suffering from tuberculosis of the lungs. The Priests have always to put on the Padân (face cloth) when reciting prayers, lest any matter defile the sacred fire put in front of them.

2. Thou shalt not have hands and feet unwashed before and after meals. This rule is observed to-day by all educated people. During plague and cholera seasons it is necessary for everybody not to touch food with hands without thoroughly washing them with hot water. At times doctors have to take a hot bath after treating a cholera patient. The English system of using table knives, forks and spoons for taking food is a very healthy method indeed; at the same time it would be much safer to wash our hands and face both before and after meals. We are *not* to put our fingers in the mouth at other times even.

3. Thou shalt not keep hands and face unwashed after a call of nature. This is quite necessary on account of flies, which may carry infection and deposit the same on the bare parts of the body and unknowingly spread the disease. There is a meaning in the Parsee custom of retracing three steps from the place of excretion in the Bâj of Hâjat.

4. Thou shalt not eat from one's mouth or drink from one's cup. The old Indian system of eating from the same dish and drinking from the same cup is extremely unwholesome and injurious to health. This is especially to be avoided in the case of diseased persons.

5. Thou shalt not move about bare-headed or bare-footed. Parsees do not generally leave the head uncovered, in order to avoid germs, and to protect the most precious part of the body viz., the brain from heat, etc. There are great chances of catching diseases if any bare part of the body touches the

ground. Plague fleas are found mostly within a few inches from the ground. We are therefore not only to put on boots and gloves, but also to tie serge-putties round the legs especially during an epidemic.

6. Thou shalt not pollute river or well water with any organic matter, dead or living. There is a special injunction that wells, etc., polluted by corpses or carcasses should be left unused for about six months and should be thoroughly drained before using the water again. It is no wonder that cholera follows a fair, when people going on pilgrimage bathe in the *sacred* waters and then unconsciously drink the dirty water at a little distance off! It is also necessary to note here that the borrowed custom of throwing flowers into running waters is certainly against the Zoroastrian law, for the water by the organic matter is spoiled on the contrary. The Parsees never throw dead bodies into rivers or bury them in the ground for similar reasons.

7. Thou shalt not touch a dead body under any circumstances. According to the Parsee Scriptures it is a sin to touch a dead body. Professional corpse-bearers are always engaged for its disposal. The body begins to decay soon after it is cooled down. The maximum period between the time of death and that of the *Pâedast* ceremony is 24 hours. There is a special spot set apart on the ground floor for the "lying in state."

8. Thou shalt not fail to burn incense on the fire every morning and evening in thy dwelling place. In all our ceremonials we burn sandal wood and incense on the fire in order to purify the atmosphere. This is especially done for four days continually after a death in a house. The Parsees also decorate the verandah of their houses with *Chunam* figures or *Chôk*, which is nothing but quicklime and which has the power of absorbing within itself the noxious carbonic acid gas.

9. Thou shalt not fail to stay apart from all habited places for 9 nights during the Barshnum ceremony. The modern idea of quarantine (40 days in old Rome and 10 in our time) is a very great safe-guard against infectious diseases.

10. Thou shalt not put on a garment of any other color but white in religious affairs. Any blot can be at once marked on a white piece. While this is safe for the outside skin, the priests put on all white clothings including the turban, which has a spiritual meaning of purity besides. White has also been regarded as a special color of the cloth used in all our *surgical halls* in order to preserve cleanliness.

### Medicine and Surgery

The Science of Medicine has played a very prominent part in the Vendidad Law-code, where every attention is paid to bodily purity. In fact, the Zoroastrian system of medicine and cures of various diseases is based on wholesome scientific principles.

The first doctor, *viz.*, Thrithra, is mentioned twice in the Avesta, as "one of the first priests of Homa, and as the first of the happy, wealthy, glorious and strong Peshdadian healers, who created immortality in the world." As a reward of prayer to Ahura for remedies and cures, he was granted thousands of medicinal plants. Faridun also had the distinction of discovering "the medical power," so much so that the amulets worn by Persians bear the name "Faridun." In the Vendidad there is given a long list of diseases, humours, etc., which were diagnosed and cured by Iranian doctors. There are three cures mentioned: (1) knife, (2) herbs, and (3) Mantras, equivalent to the Greek surgery, medicine and prayer. This last is a mysterious weapon to smite down the Druj as it was believed that all diseases were created by the evil spirits. "To thee, O sickness, I say avaunt!"

is a characteristic spell. Turning to the practical part of Iránian surgery and physic, we note in the 7th Fargard that the Iránian doctor was trained on a regular system. He was to give his trials to or operate upon "a devilish person" at first. Only three trials were given to him and "if he treat with the knife for the third time a worshipper of the Daevas and he die, he is unfit for ever and ever!" Three successful trials more on a Mazda-worshipper, and he passed the examination. What are the doctor's other qualifications? A physician is one "who knows the limbs of the body, their articulations, remedies for the diseases, who is skilled to prepare health-giving drugs medically, and to expel corruption and impurity; who also possesses his own carriage, and an assistant, and is, moreover, gentle in words, the friend of the sick, respecting modesty, protecting good reputation, and above all, ready to further peace and multiply the delights of life."

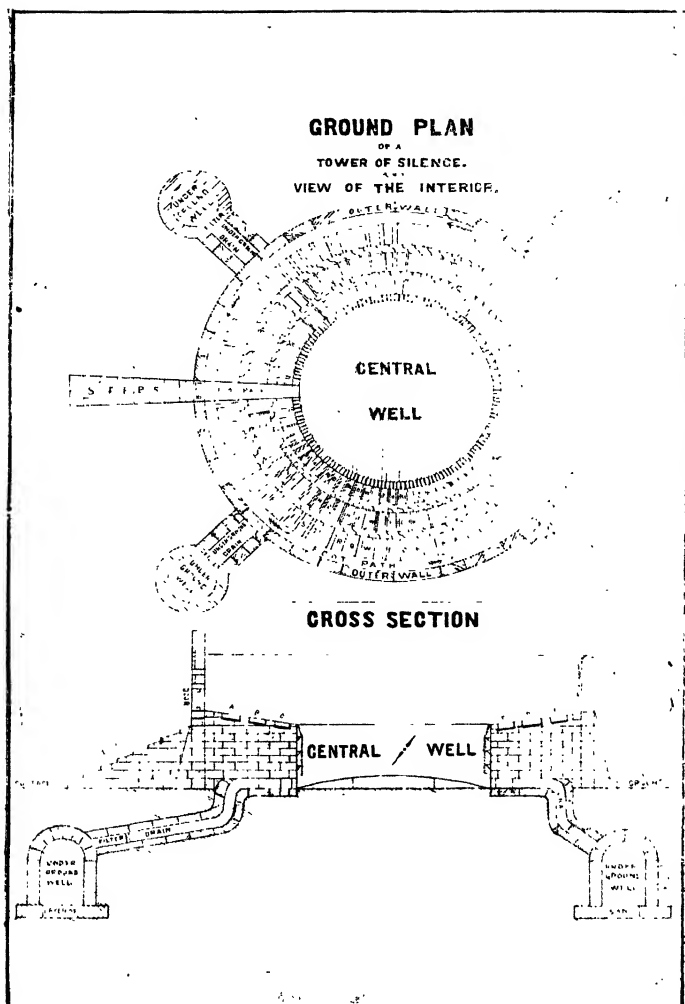
The doctor's fees were paid according to the patient's rank. From a priest he received only blessings; from the patriarch, a horse or a camel; and from a female, a female animal, and so on.

Over and above the medical treatment of human beings, there was the treatment of lower animals on lines similar to the veterinary science of to-day.

In the 5th Chapter of the Vendidad there is the treatment given of a woman with a still born child. The query is put to Ahura: "O maker of the material world, Thou holy One! If in the house of a worshipper of Mazda there be a woman with a still-born child, what shall the worshippers of Mazda do?" The first thing to do is to prepare the cleanest and driest place in the house for her. Then the "Dokhma" in her is washed down with Gaomez *mixed with ashes*. The ashes work as a good alkaline preservative. The food given is boiled milk, or cooked milk *without water*. In any case the life of the patient is never







**UPPER:** Ground plan of a Dokhma or Tower of Silence, showing 1 central well, 3 rows of stone receptacles, and 4 underground wells

**LOWER:** Section of the same, showing the drains and filters

to be endangered by too much adherence to rules. She is allowed to take whatever she deserves; only her precious life is to be saved. Here is an instance of toleration shewn in the law-code of the Parsees.

### Science of the Tower of Silence

The construction of the Tower is based on the best sanitary principles. It is generally built on hill tops. The circular platform is about 300 feet in circumference, and there are three open rows of receptacles for males, females and children. There are footpaths for the corpse-bearers to walk on. The central well is about 150 feet in diameter. In this are thrown all bones, which are dried up by atmospheric agencies and also by the powerful rays of the tropical sun. Ultimately they are reduced to dust containing chiefly calcium phosphates.

There are holes in the inner sides of the well, through which rain water passes into four drains. These are in turn connected with four other underground wells, covered over with a thick layer of sand. At the end of each drain a mixture of charcoal and sand is placed, to be renewed occasionally. These filters are kept here to purify the rain water which washes the tower from above and which requires to be made clean before it enters the ground. This method of disposing of the dead matter (flesh distillation) is very quick, so that putrefaction is altogether prevented, and the Tower is not at all injurious to public health.

### Architecture

From the ruins of several old cities in Persia one can get an idea of the kind of architecture in which the people excelled, in those days. In Nakshe-Shâpur, Ecbatânâ, Hamadân, Tâke-bostân

Nakshe-Shirin-and-Khosrou, Pasargad and Persepolis the traveller finds beautiful relics of Persian architecture. In Balkh there is supposed to be the largest Átash Kadeh and the places Báku and Bâtum for the Eternal Fire of Zoroastrians are not to be forgotten. From the Avesta, too, we can cull out passages about the building-art. There is in the Sarosh Yasht a reference "to a well-built palace, with a hundred windows, a lofty one with a thousand pillars, beautifully built with ten thousand props." Possibly here the most magnificent architectural ruins of Persepolis are referred to, *viz.*, the grand stair-case and the palace of a hundred pillars of Darius the great. Then we have rock-cut inscriptions and sculptures of rare value to demand the attention of explorers. Among the rich engravings in Persepolis we have figures of even modern articles such as carriages, tables, chairs, spectacles, etc. The biggest arch is in Madâin, the ancient capital of Mesopotamia. Ctesiphon is a desert now, except for the Ták-e-Kesrá, the throne of Khusrou, a great vaulted hall ornamented with beautiful plasters, the most splendid example of Sássánian architecture. These dazzle the eyes of a traveller. All of a sudden the arch rises majestically like a king of the desert. This place, Ctesiphon, first came into prominence about 129 B.C., when the Parthians conquered the land east of the Euphrates. On the ruins of these and others rose the mighty empire of the Sassanides, founded by Ardeshir in 226 A.D. It rose to its greatest glory under Chosroes in 531 A.D. In 637 A.D. it was taken over by Arabs. Ctesiphon was a scene of many battles between the Romans and the Persians, and once more this "Palace of Nosherwán" has become a war-centre.

The recent archæological excavations at Pataliputra in Bihár show evidence of Persian influence in ancient India. Old buildings have been found there resembling the ruins of Persepolis. It clearly appears that Persian arts were imported into Northern India. Chandragupta's palace was built in



Silent witnesses to a bygone civilisation: Ruins of Tak-e Kesra or the Throne of Chosroes, showing the wonderful Arch and .

Audience Hall of Noshervan the Just

Size of the Hall: length 312, height 115 feet, depth 175 feet



Persian style and "Asoka's inscriptions imitated the style of Darius, and their script was of Achaemenian origin." In several respects Persianisation or Iranisation and along with it old Assyrian or Mesopotamian traces may be noticed in the early civilisation of Aryanised India.

### Dualism and Evolution

"Thus forth I announce to you Life's first two Spirits,  
Of whom the more bounteous the evil accosted :  
Never our thoughts, nor our creeds, nor understanding,  
Never our beliefs, nor words, nor yet our actions  
Nor can our souls or faiths ever be one."

Gáthá XLV (*Mills*).

This stanza illustrates the very important law which Zarathushtra has endeavoured to expound in the Gáthás. Dualism is not, however, a part of His theology but of His "speculative philosophy." The connection of the two poles of the battery produces a powerful current of electricity and the blending together of "Life's first two spirits" causes life itself to thrive. It is the reconciliation of the Two that makes life worth living. A great good can be done to humanity by following this Law of Compensation whereby "an inevitable dualism besets nature," says Emerson, "so that each thing is a half and suggests another to make it whole." The very fact that the magnetic needle points north and south proves that our earth itself is a huge magnet. But for this dual manifestation, the innumerable combinations in the Universe would not have existed at all.

And yet it seems paradoxical to suppose that Good and Evil in the Gáthás are twins created by Ahura Mazda, who thereby becomes the deliberate creator of Evil. But this part of Zoroaster's philosophy is rather a negative method of teaching

how to be good. Unless something is said of darkness, the idea of light is not *easily* conveyed. Unless one thing is light, another cannot be heavy. Unless one falls ill, one does not appreciate the condition of health, and unless one is ready to die, the prospects of Paradise are not made manifest.

Science affirms that "there is no force without matter, and no matter without force." Good and Evil become therefore relative terms. Sir Oliver Lodge explains that "Evil is not an absolute thing, but has reference to a standard of attainment. An organization whose normal temperature is far above absolute zero, is necessarily liable to deadly cold; but cold is not in itself a positive or created thing." The positive pole of a magnet cannot be called good, and the negative bad. A hill appears high, only if looked at from a hollow or valley.

A still more satisfactory explanation can be given with the aid of the later *potential* theory of Electricity. We are thereby able to conceive better the idea of attaining always a higher and higher standard or potential of life. The fascinating theory of Evolution comes to our aid, when one of the two poles rises ultimately to an infinitely high level and the other to an infinitely low level, till the positive merges into the universal reservoir or God Himself. In giving a promise "to hate the evil and embrace the good" we simply take life in the positive or higher potential sense and manage to evolve ourselves higher and higher both in mind and in soul.

We may take the term "Dualism" in whatever sense we like, but this is true that in the doctrine of evil, Zarathushtra has stood unique in all times. Whereas the old Aryans thought that evil could not be overcome and so tried to appease the various gods of miseries by means of sacrifices, the Persian Prophet has taken us to a safer side and taught us how to fight out and drive away the Druj, which principle remains therefore highly ethical in value.

### Science of Zend Philology

The founder of that wonderful science, philology or science of language, was Franz Bopp a German scholar, who also became the founder of comparative philology of the Indo-European languages. But the credit of putting Zend into this stock and attaching an equal importance to it along with Sanskrit was Eugène Burnouf, who after twenty years of patient learning in 1852 came to the conclusion that "Zend and Sanskrit are sister languages and that the people whose traditions and legends culminated respectively in the Vedas and the Avesta were originally of *one family*." The discovery and interpretation of the Cuneiform inscriptions on the Bahistun rocks by Rawlinson gave a fresh impetus to Zend Philology, and since then we have a number of interesting conclusions drawn by savants. This has all the more strengthened the bond of Aryan brotherhood especially of India and Persia, whose forefathers lived once together in an unknown Aryan home. Also, Persia is proved to be a connecting link between Europe and Asia.

The comparison of definite Avesta words and grammar with those of Sanskrit shows that with very few phonetic changes in accordance with Grimm's law of languages we can turn passages of the Avesta into the dialect of the Rig Veda without any material difference. From words we go to objects, from objects to ideas and also to religious thoughts. On these lines or tests of culture we find many resemblances between the two Aryan families (1) in the use of metals like copper, (2) in the feeding of beasts like horses, camels, etc., (3) in the lofty poetical compositions similar in padas and metre, (4) in the position given to women, and (5) in the social status of the four classes of Athornán (priest), Rathaestár (warrior), Vástryosh (farmer) and Hutoksh (artizan). Moreover, the conceptions of various Aryan gods are strangely identical and we have the dieties of the powers of nature, the dawn, the sun, Mithra,



Varuna, Âtash and others. It is with great interest that we learn about a very recent German discovery made in Cappadocia (Asia Minor) of rock inscriptions, showing the presence of similar gods worshipped there in olden times. These inscriptions date from the 15th century B.C. and are written in a language akin to both Sanskrit and Greek. One of these Hittite rock-records has to do very much with the gods of the Rig Veda.

The highest ethical conception among the Aryans is that of Ahura, the same as Asura in Sanskrit. While Asura later on lost its hold on the Hindus, who once again turned to polytheism, with Zarathushtra the Star of Irán and of higher culture Ahura Mazda took an upward tendency, and He taught the then known world the grandest of His theological conceptions, *viz.*, the one and only God of His immortal Gáthic hymns. This along with His teachings about the immortality of the soul, the reward of good and punishment of evil near the Bridge of Judgment and the final meeting in the durbár of Ahura Mazda through righteousness makes the creed of Zarathushtra decidedly a sublime one. This most fascinating science of man-study has thus enabled us to see how *much* was before the eyes of our Aryan forefathers so many centuries ago.

### Miscellaneous

Casual references can be made to other branches of science and we may mention physiognomy or the science of reading from one's face one's habits and nature, the science of interpreting dreams, the purpose of which was "to guide by wisdom whatever has been seen by the soul," and also chemistry, which was then developed up to the standard of preparing the metal iron, besides gold and silver, from ores, for vessels made of iron were common in the Avestaic period, *e.g.*, "Keresásp cooked his food in an iron vessel." Also a very fantastic guess-

work is made from a passage in the *Áván yasht* about some "hydro-electric magnetic currents" created in running waters when exposed to the sun's rays during the day.

The art of navigation was known to the early Persians of the Achaemenian period. Cyrus II is said to have employed ships of war at the time of the Retreat of the Ten Thousand. There were also fortresses built for war defence.

The postal system introduced by Darius the Great was complete in itself; the service was quick, so much so that "The Persian post-riders flew faster than the cranes." A letter from the royal palace at Susa reached Sardis in about a week.

Gardening, along with agriculture, was considered synonymous with Righteousness. "This charming pursuit," observes Prof. Witt, "had been raised almost to the rank of a religious duty by Zoroaster, who had taught his disciples that when occupied in the planting and tending of trees useful to man, they were engaged in a good action, well-pleasing to God." As a result, there were big parks attached to the royal palaces in Persia.

Music—the divine gift for man on earth—was not ignored. We have a reference to this branch in the *Vendidad* ch. 13, para 46. King Jamshed is said to have patronised professional music (*Mirkhond*) and *Ardeshir Bábegán* according to his "Book of Exploits" was a lover of music. *Firdousi* tells about a band of Indian singers invited by King *Beherámgoré* to his court for "entertaining his ryot," and also about military bands used by kings like *Faridun* and *Minocheher*.

Games such as polo and chess are clearly of Persian origin. There are other minor games, *e.g.*, *Ás*, *Backgammon*, *Ganjifeh*, *Otozbir*, *Quáb* and *Jouzbázi*, some of which are played with cards and dice. There is also mentioned in the *Sháh Náme* an "international match of ball," possibly cricket.

### Science of Education

In these days when the problem of education in India is so hotly discussed by our senators and educationists, it will be appropriate to know what the ideals of education were in ancient Irán. By our Iránian forefathers education was considered a *duty*. Education is the eye of a community. In the song on the *Ideal man and woman*, the epithet "well-educated" is the most significant. In his *Book of Advice*, Adarbád Māráspond tells us: "Do not keep your wife, children and other co-religionists and thyself without education, so that thou mayest not suffer hardship, grief and repentance." Also, "Marry your daughter to an intelligent and learned man, because such a one is like fertile soil wherein seeds sown bear good fruits." In the "*Átash Nyáish*" a good offspring is considered that which is "intelligent, adorning the country, sitting in the Anjuman, of good repute, relieving others from distress, strong and promoting the house, street, and land." We thus see that the ultimate aim of education was to make one fit for, and useful to the country of which one was a member.

In very appreciative terms Prof. Rape tells us about Parsee Education: "The most remarkable and the most beautiful form in which the moral spirit of the Persian people realised itself in life is the well-known Persian Education. It indeed, at an early age, implanted in the souls of the young Persians the sentiments which should always guide them in all their dealings and which prepared and hardened their bodies in order that, as capable citizens, they might thereby be able at some future time to serve their native country with worthy deeds."

The school-going age was seven, when the child was first initiated into the Zoroastrian Faith (Naojot). Before this period the child received Home Education. The parents were responsible so far for the child-stage and in the *Sháyast lá Sháyast*

we are told that "the duties and deeds which a *child* performs are to be counted as those of the parents as if they were done by themselves."

After this initial treatment and at home training for obedience and other virtues, the child was sent to the *Maktab*s or *Madressás*, where the teachers employed were mostly priests. They were called *Aethrapaiti* or *Ervads* and their pupils *Aethryas*. Between the teacher and the taught there was always that happy relation which is also conspicuous in the *Gurukul* System of the Hindus. Indeed this was praiseworthy. While laying the foundation-stone of the Hindu University, Lord Hardinge said: "Indeed the whole Indian idea of education is wrapped up in the conception of a group of pupils surrounding their 'guru' in loving reverence and not only imbibing the words of wisdom that fell from his lips but also looking up to him for guidance in religion and morality and moulding their characters in accordance with his precept and example." This was also the spirit of Persian discipline, just like the tutorial system of Cambridge.

According to Herodotus, Xenophon and Strabo, education in ancient Iran had two main branches, (1) of the body (2) of the mind. Physical training comprised mainly horse-riding and archery. But the chief subject of school education in those days was *morality* based upon religion. Character-building was the teacher's chief object and it was applied to practical life. It appears from the Iranians' idea of keeping schools apart from city or bazaar life that the Boarding School was preferred to the Day School. "The question of religion bound up as it is with the Whence and Whither, the Alpha and Omega of life, stirs the deepest depths of human nature; it is the factor in education beside which the teacher of languages, mathematics and science sinks into insignificance, and if it is withdrawn it cannot but be that the product of the two types of school (the Day School and the Boarding School) should be different." In short, Education

without religion is futile. The precepts "Humata, Hukhta and Hvarshta," agreed to by the pupil on his Initiation Day, were closely followed by him or her during school-life and after-life. Even the words engraved on the Bahistun hills bear testimony to the Iranian's *love for truth*. Three things were especially taught to the children in school, and they are (1) riding, (2) shooting, and (3) truth-speaking. "Purity is best for man from his very birth," and "Break not the promise, even if it is given by word of mouth," were the chief moral lessons pointed out in the Avesta. Above all, the pupils were so educated that they gave fullest respect to their parents, teachers, elders; and, above all, to the rulers of the land.

BOOK 8

MORAL TALES FROM  
PERSIAN CLASSICS



# Moral Tales from Persian Classics

## **A Place for Moral Education**

**A** STRONG desire is now-a-days expressed by our educationists that Moral Instruction should form part of the school programme. The old system of making the pupils learn by rote is to be done away with and its place should be given to definite practical illustrations from every-day life. Maxims and sayings do not appeal to the young mind as much as short and pithy tales bearing good morals. In showing the pupil the Noble Path, the system of moral instruction through tales told in an effective matter is of immense advantage. Apart from religion, a good deal of useful work regarding character-building can also be done through morality, which is the "handmaid" of religion. In our object of making the child fit for a useful and righteous life in the world, this sort of education is necessary.

## **Sources of information**

This method of teaching morals by means of concrete examples is quite in harmony with our own classical method of traditional anecdotes and allegories. Mr. F. J. Gould, the Official Demonstrator of the Moral Education League of London, says: "The East has from time immemorial couched its religious and moral teachings in the form of the tale or the emblem; and Europe has borrowed from Asia great masses of religious poetry and legend, and the germs of much of its folklore and fairy-tale literature." So that in the *Sháh Náme'h* and other Persian works we come across many interesting narratives which can be re-told to children with very great advantage. A selection has been made of a few such stories and gathered in this book,



with the two-fold object of entertaining the pupils and showing them a practical Moral Path.

\* \* \* \*

Since the peaceful days of King Ardeshir Bábegán, there were some good customs in vogue in the country of Irán. Among them there was one very praiseworthy practice of reporting to the government the name of any unusually clever man who lived in any part of the Empire, and of offering him a responsible post in the Durbár.

We have all heard of Nosherván the Just. He was called just because justice was his watchword throughout his life. Many are the tales told about his glory and his greatness.

One day Nosherván dreamt a dream, but none of his Durbáris could interpret the dream and solve the puzzle. The Emperor entrusted this task to a Mobad called Ázádsarv. Not finding any one in the Capital Cities of Madáin, Ázádsarv travelled all over the country for the right man, but in vain. At last he reached Merv in Khorássán. He purposely visited the Madressá there and consulted the teachers of the school. Presently his searching eye fell upon one smart-looking lad called Buzorg Meher, a son of Bokhteh. On being told what Ázádsarv's mission was, he gladly undertook the task which the Mobad wished to assign to him. The Ustád began to scold the boy for his impudence in meddling with serious state affairs. The deputy however persuaded the teacher and succeeded in bringing Buzorg Meher into the court of Nosherván. No sooner was he informed about the dream, than Buzorg smartly gave out: "Sire, there is a big miscreant just at present hid somewhere in the royal palace." Lo and behold, the criminal was at once caught in some of the inner chambers and was chastised. The king was highly pleased with the inner sight of the boy and gave orders that he should be kept there in the Durbár along with the learned of the land. By and by the boy-philosopher rose to

higher and higher positions. The king himself learnt many new and strange things from him; so much so that it is said Nosherván became "Ádel" just on account of him. The genius of man cannot be concealed and we are told in the Aibádgar-i Vazord Mitra how "Education elevates and enlightens a person."

\* \* \* \* \*

Burzorg Meher had toiled "deeper and deeper in the mines of knowledge." In fact there were several meetings held by the courtiers to test his intelligence. Once to the court of Noshervan Ádel came a Messenger from the king of Sind. He was accompanied by a gorgeous train of followers who brought costly presents for the king and also a puzzle about the game of chess, with a letter to the effect that the Sindhi King would pay him whatever tribute he desired, if only his people could find out the secret of playing the game. Otherwise a tribute was to be paid by Nosherván himself. The intelligence and patience of several courtiers were tried, but to no purpose. Then Burzorg Meher stepped in and setting the several pawns in front and the king and the queen in the middle of each side and so on showed how chess could be played. We know that chess is a very difficult and intellectual game. The Indian embassy thereupon agreed that Burzorg Meher did solve the puzzle, and Nosherván's heart was joy. But for his genius, it would have been a degradation to the Persian Monarch.

It is needless to say that Burzorg later on became a unique figure in the court. He rose to the dignity of the Prime Minister. Many are the philosopher's works, among which his "Book of Advice" takes the first place. His doctrine is that of the frailty of the material world with all its wealth, and the permanence of Sawáb.

What is then the key to Burzorg Meher's life? By dint of personal efforts, aided by his unusual talent, he proved that any

one born even in the poorest circumstances *can* attain the highest position in life, if only he or she *serves rightly*.

\* \* \* \* \*

Rulers in our times do not personally supervise the districts of which they are masters. They appoint governors and collectors. But it was a practice in those days for many Persian kings to visit their people personally in disguise, in order to acquaint themselves with the actual affairs of the state. Beherámgoré was such a king and used to go from house to house by night. One day he went to the house of a Jew, who was known to possess riches but was a miser. His name was Abraham. The king asked Abraham for a night's lodging. The Jew refused to give him shelter and said: "This is no sarái; I can't entertain you." Thereupon the traveller replied: "I have come from far and find no other place to pass the night. If you will kindly allow me to lie down under your portico for the time, I'll leave in the early morning." The Jew agreed to the proposal with reluctance, but added that he was to clean the place himself, if his horse made it dirty. So saying he allowed Beherámgoré to occupy that outside part of his building but offered him no food or drink. Next morning the king got up and with his rich turban-cloth removed the filth and went his way after duly thanking the owner of the place. When he had gone, the Jew ordered his servant to bring back the dirty but costly cloth which the king had thrown away by the side of the road. He was such a great miser.

Next night king Beherám visited another of his subjects. There was a Persian water-carrier called Lambak, very liberal though poor. On being requested to treat him as a guest for the night, the man came with a smiling face and received the traveller and treated him with hospitality. His horse was taken to a stable and supplied with water and hay. The king found himself quite at home and duly left the poor man's house in the early morning.

When he returned to the court, Beherámgoré sent for these two men of different types. Both were surprised to find in the king's face the same old guest they had entertained the nights before. The heart of the water-carrier beat with joy, that of the other palpitated through fear. Turning to the miserable Jew, the sovereign remarked: "Thou art not worthy of the amount of wealth thou hast." So saying he ordered half of his riches to be given away to the poor water-carrier and the other half to a boy servant of the Jew. But the king was not merciless. He instructed the boy to grant Abraham a daily allowance of two dirams. The Jew had no other course but to bow down and submissively obey the royal command. One suffers because one is self-centred and insolent. "A good government is that," says the Mino Kherad or the Book of Wisdom, "which keeps the poor without trouble, its laws all just and the kingdom in a thriving condition."

\* \* \* \* \*

There are other kings of Persia who too have ruled wisely. It is recorded that in the regime of Tehmurásp the Pishdâdian, a powerful tribe of Divs (evil men) was subdued. Many of them were kept as prisoners of war in a room not far from the royal residence. One night Tehmurásp was watching them through an opening in the wall. Strange to say the king found one of the prisoners marking some signs with a charcoal piece on a dry leaf and passing it on to his comrades, who looked at it and returned the leaf with their reply in like manner. The king was astonished at this wonderful way of conveying thoughts and appreciating this merit of the prisoners, gave orders to release them one and all. So it is good to learn *something from evil persons*. Ahriman is evil but is always *busy* doing something. Let us learn industry from him and set aside his mischief. King Tehmurásp was also kind towards his own subjects. Once a terrible famine visited some parts of his kingdom. His was an immediate proclamation that all the

rich persons in the kingdom were to eat once a day and to offer food to the destitute and the poor. In that oft-recited Ahunavar Kaláms we pray that "the Kingdom of Ahura is for him who offers bread to the poor." Kings in those times were rather absolute, but indeed very kind.

\* \* \* \* \*

The wheels of government sometimes move slowly, and court affairs are generally delayed. A Persian soldier who was wounded in a battle against the Romans was discharged by the officer-commanding as unfit for active service. Not getting altogether disappointed, however, he sent a petition to the King for a revision of his case and for a life pension. Many excuses were made by the courtiers and delay was caused. At length, tired of postponement he appeared personally before the king, as kings were accessible to any of the ryot in those days. The Monarch after hearing the complaint said: "We shall see to that." The unhappy soldier suddenly cried out as he could not bear the words: "Your prosperous majesty can see to that just now." So saying he uncovered his chest and showed the scars of deep wounds. His Majesty was greatly touched by the sight and applauded him for his great courage. With a smile on his face he commanded the courtiers to grant him a pension for life and a robe of honour, that is, a sword, a ring, a studded stick, etc., all of which the poor man got, for he had what is called moral courage. Thus did the monarch show his magnanimity.

\* \* \* \* \*

Beherámgoré the Sássánian monarch ruled for twenty years, and one of his greatest works was his fight against the Khákán of Turkey. The Mahomedan king had heard much about Beheram's luxurious ways and wanted to invade Persia. Presently he appeared on the other side of the Amu Dariá. The Persian monarch was informed accordingly, but he found himself altogether unprepared for giving a battle. Yet, as he was plucky he

came out himself with a train of nearly four hundred horsemen. He first went to the fire-temple in Azarbaiján. On the way however many men joined the army, till nearly 4,000 were gathered. The king then approached the enemy's camp. He strategically divided his men into four divisions and ordered each soldier to prepare for himself a dry leather bag, stuff it with pebbles, and then bind the whole bag to the back part of the saddle. In this manner they were instructed to attack the enemies at night from four sides, the king himself to lead the right wing. With a furious rush and with shouts of "King Beherám's Victory" and the hollow-sounding skin-bags, the Persian soldiers put the Khákán and his followers to rout. There was panic on all sides, as though there were an army 200,000 strong. Some fled on one side, some another; many were killed or captured. Victorious Beherám returned with a rich booty, while the Khákán was forced to pay a large ransom. This much Beherám could do, for he was ever ready, ingenious and plucky.

\* \* \* \* \*

Once upon a time while a hunting, King Nosherván required a little common salt. He ordered his men to bring some from a neighbouring cottage, but urged them to pay for the quantity they were to get. Those men turned to the monarch and said. "Sire, what if we take a little without payment, for it will cost us almost nothing." Nosherván justly replied: "Listen, O men of business, injustice and oppression are in the beginning very slight. They grow more and more as time goes on. All the crimes in the country start from the initial little." So highly conscientious the king was, and he was ever ready to set his own example to his subjects.

\* \* \* \* \*

The human heart throbs equally well in all, even kings feel sorrow when there is an occasion for sympathy. Sorrow for

a fellow creature in woe and misery is a healthy sign of human nature. So also joy creates joy.

Firdousi, whose name is a household word among us, draws our fullest sympathy when we learn that he was not given the promised 60,000 gold coins for as many verses of the Sháh Námeḥ, by Sultan Mahmood. He was offered, we are told, 60,000 silver coins only. This present of course, the Persian poet declined. But alas! the King's heart being afterwards moved the promised gift came too late at Tus, where the author of the Persian epic had retired. Firdousi had just expired when the King's servants reached his place.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the reign of Shápúr the Great, a Persian soldier fell into the hands of the Romans after a severe battle. While in prison, naturally he lifted up his hands for divine aid. A faint voice was heard, however, which said: "Ask your monarch to come to your rescue from Persia on a piebald horse." This news reached the King, who sent no less than 70,000 men to give a fresh battle to the Romans and then to relieve the poor Persian soldier. The Persian king, Shapur well knew the words in the Gáthás: "Thou wilt come into my friendship by giving help to thy fellow men."

\* \* \* \* \*

For his peaceful rule in Irán King Kae Kâus is well known; but he was ever greedy to extend his dominions. One of his court-singers once gave him a very fascinating account of that devil-inhabited place in the North, called Mázandarán. Mázandarán, he sang, was at its best "with its ever-blooming roses, its melodious nightingales, its verdant plains, its mountains shaded with lofty trees, and adorned to their summits with flowers which perfumed the air, its clear murmuring rivulets and above all its valiant warriors." From that moment the

King, however much he was dissuaded, resolved upon conquering that part of the country. He was told that Mázandarán was a home for devilish people headed by Deev-e-Sufiid, the White Demon. They then sent for Zál, the father of Rustom. He too could not succeed in preventing Kae Kâus from undertaking an impossible task.

The King at length started with his army to the region of the devils, and gave them a battle with a result that he was put in a strong prison in the fortress there by the "valiant warriors."

Zál however was greatly moved, and asked his son Rustom, the great Persian hero, to go and release their sovereign. Rustom gladly promised to fulfil the desire of his father. Then commenced that series of seven calamities or Haftakhán that befell the brave Persian.

At the end of the first day's journey Rustom halted in a jungle and fell asleep, letting his horse Ruksh graze in a meadow close by. A furious lion suddenly attacked the strong horse, but was badly hurt by him and ultimately killed. When Rustom woke up, he was greatly surprised to find how his animal *could* kill a lion!

Next time while he was taking a little rest, twice the horse neighed and startled Rustom. A third time some strange noise was heard and Rustom amazingly found Ruksh fighting with a huge dragon, who was trying to bite his master! The hero thanked Ormuzd, and petted his faithful companion most warmly.

On the third day while sitting beside a stream of water, Rustom was strangely accosted by a wicked sorceress. He at once rushed at the appearance and asked who it was. "I am deputed by Áhriman for your trial." Rustom, however, with his huge Gurz drove her away.



Once again Rustom lost his way, and tired and exhausted he lay down in a field. Presently the gardener met him and inquired in an angry tone who he was, for the field belonged to one called Oulád. In his usual manner Rustom rejoined: "Tell your master to come here and he shall have my reason."

Then Oulád got enraged and started with his combatants, but all gazing at the giant rival and his furious horse took to heels. Oulád thereupon yielded and promised to give Rustom the information he required about the residence of the Suffid Div, and to be his guide there.

On the sixth day the city of Mázandarán was sighted. Two of the Div's accomplices met Rustom on the way, one of whom even dared to seize Rustom by his belt. But the Persian athlete caught him by the neck, wrenched it from the body and hurled it at his companion, and there was dismay on all sides.

Rustom was by this time within the very limits of the castle where Kae Kâus lay enchained in a dark cell. The King made out Rustom and with tears in his eyes entreated to be rescued, which in spite of the Div's stern resistance was done in no time, the heavy fetters being knocked off with his mace.

Thus Rustom's object of releasing the king was achieved, but not without trouble. It was his perseverance that thus gained for him reputation and world glory. "Perseverance is a noble virtue," according to the Book of Wisdom. The whole of Mázandarán was ultimately subdued and the White Demon was slain. But Oulád was made the Governor of the conquered province through Rustom's favour. Rustom no doubt was a formidable yet noble foe.

\* \* \* \* \*

There is no room for a haughty man in this world. "Do not be presumptuous for any good in this world, for such is like a cloud moving on a rainy day, which no hill can keep back."

This is a beautiful thought from the Mino Kherad. Also in the Avesta *Tandarosti* we pray : "May humility rule over pride in this house and charity over avarice." Even that Greek Emperor Alexander who conquered Persia and burnt Persepolis and who arrogantly called himself the conqueror of the world, had in his last will directed his men to lay his mortal body in the bier with both his hands empty and unfolded, in order to let the world know that "empty-handed he came and empty-handed also he passed away."

The splendour of Kai Kaus's court was very great, and he considered himself the lord of the earth. One day he was told by the "wise men" of his court how he could fly up in the air and be also the conquerer of the "starry heavens above."

Nice idea, that! He ordered his people to prepare for him an "aeroplane." That word sounds strange here. But Kae Káus in all his glory could command his courtiers to make for him even a rude flying machine. This is what they did. First of all they took a wooden stool, at four corners of which a long staff was fixed with a piece of meat tied on to the upper end. To each corner of the seat a vulture was chained. Now the birds, in their attempt to eat the food supplied, unconsciously lifted up the whole frame, carrying with it the first Pársee aviator. Up went the plane and with it the king. Higher and higher the vultures soared, till worn out and exhausted they stopped fluttering their wings and down sank the aerial throne. From the high place of vanity, the king fell to the ground, till with great difficulty he was discovered again and removed from a far off desert. That day he understood the saying well, "Pride goes before destruction." And not only with a king, but with every human being it is so. The entire treasure of Kárun is worthless in view of the lasting bliss one obtains in that House of Song, which is promised to all true followers of the Prophet.

Gaváh must be a familiar name to us. It was he who once saved Irán from the cruel hands of Zohák the tyrant, and put the crown of the noble country on the head of Faridun. Gaváh himself was a blacksmith, but with courage and devotion and industry he gathered a most efficient army of Persians and people rallied round his banner which was made of his leather apron. In the battle that they gave to Zohák, the tyrant was crushed. Then came the turn and trial of Gaváh. Who was to be the ruler of Persia? Naturally the followers selected Gaváh, who had so bravely fought. But Gaváh knew that however brave he might be, it was better for him to take a second place; and prayed that a more talented man could make a better king. Faridun, who then was crowned, appointed Gaváh the commander-in-chief of Persian armies.

\* \* \* \* \*

Nosherwan the Just was a man to appreciate the work of even the poorest of the poor. On his way to the capital Ctesiphon, once he came across an old farmer, who was planting walnuts. "O man," the king exclaimed, "do you ever dream of tasting the fruits of these plants during your life-time?" By these words he meant of course that the planter was too old to outlive the fruit season. But there was an unexpected but very wise reply: "Your Majesty, others sowed seeds, and we reap the harvest to-day. Just now it is incumbent on us to plant, so that those who come after us may taste the fruits." "Zéh, zéh, zéh," rejoined the monarch, "bravo, thou art a wise man." And so saying he ordered his men to give him a nice gold present.

\* \* \* \* \*

It is said that in the prosperous days of this same monarch Nosherwán, there were put up all over the country some 12,000 "ropes of justice", called *janzir-e-ádel*, which when pulled gave the king notice that there was a complaint from his ryot. The central station was in the capital city and a phone-boy

(intermediary) was engaged there to communicate the message to the Sovereign.

One day it so happened that a goat accidentally pulled the chain. Presently the Monarch appeared on the scene but was surprised to find a beast seeking justice! He understood somehow that it was a complaint about an Azdáh. The kind ruler at once sent some heroes who did away with the dragon.

Another time a half-starved horse, taking the rope to be some green grape plant, began to chew it. Accidentally the bell was rung. The Monarch, however, with his usual kindness inquired who the owner of the animal was and why it was thus starved. It was discovered that the horse belonged to one of his own ministers, who was thereupon rebuked for his negligence.

In the Patel Pashemáni it is considered a sin to injure lower animals. There it is stated "I repent of all the sins that I may have committed against the cattle and all other animals that are cared for by the Archangel Bahman." Also in the Homa Yasht, it is recorded that "the horse curses the rider: 'Thou, who dost not care to give me strength, may never be a yoker of swift horses'."

\* \* \* \* \*

Once upon a time a Persian prince went a-hunting along with his advisers and other followers. From village to village they went till the whole retinue was ordered to halt at a convenient place. The Prince along with his Dastur alone proceeded further. Both came up to a ruined village, where on a tree were sitting two owls, moping and whooping so loudly that the Prince heard them. Turning to his spiritual adviser, he inquired if he knew the language of birds and could explain the cause of the owls' lamentation. The Dastur was ready with the answer: "Your Highness, one of these owls speaks to the other and complains that it has a daughter to marry but

requires one hundred ruined villages as the dowry! The other replies: 'You do not despair; when we are to get as our future sovereign *such a prince as this*, we shall have hundreds of deserted villages in the kingdom!'" It was nicely done. The hint was enough for the Prince to resolve from that day never to be negligent of his dominions in the days to follow, but to leave his country in prosperity and peace.

\* \* \* \* \*

A fishmonger who had caught a fish and who did not think it worth selling in the bazaar, thought within himself: "If I were to sell it, I'll get a few Tulus. Rather I will present it to the King." Khusroe Purvez the grandson of Nosherván was then ruling over Sássánian Persia. On being told that a fishmonger wished to pay his respects to him, the king gave him an audience. Approving of his small present offered in all good faith, he gave him a purse containing 1,000 Mohors (gold coins). Serene the beautiful Queen of Purvez was also present there and she asked the king why he gave him such a rich reward, while a small gift would have done very well. Purvez replied: "You are right, my dear. But now that I have given my word, I cannot demand the money back." The queen said: "I will show you how to get back the costly gift. Pray ask the man to let us know whether the fish is a male or a female, and whether he could bring also the other. If he can do so, he should be granted 1,000 more coins; if not, he should get nothing." But the fishmonger's reply was ingenious when he rejoined that it was a neutral fish. The king was greatly amused and gave him 1,000 coins more.

While the fishmonger was just leaving the court after this pleasant event, he accidentally dropped a coin on the carpet. This he tried to pick up from the ground with great anxiety. The Queen could bear this sort of fun no longer. She at once spoke: "What a miserly person this!" There was another

ready retort from the lucky man: "Your Majesty, I thought it would be a shameful thing for me to let the coin remain on the floor; for I feared it might be trampled over by one of the courtiers and the figure of the king of the country, engraved on the face of the coin, would be disrespected." This was too much for the queen, but enough to move Purvez for a thousand more Mohors.

It does not cost us to be courteous to others. Even in our difficulties it is necessary for us to be courteous, sweet-tongued and kind towards other people.

\*

\*

\*

Afrásiáb was a wicked tyrant, who had once imprisoned the good youth Bizan in a dark and deep pit. Although a little food was occasionally dropped in from a small hole, the poor man was starved almost to death. But Rustom who heard about his sad plight, undertook to set Bizan free. On reaching the place of imprisonment, Rustom broke open the cave and by means of his noose dragged out the prisoner. As soon as Bizan saw the light of the day again, he poured out words of thanksgiving to his great redeemer. Rustom then requested him return home at once and take some rest. But good Bizan would not leave his benefactor thus alone; nor would he allow him to proceed to defeat Afrásiáb unless he accompanied him. To go with his friend in the hour of trouble was his earnest desire. Both of them therefore proceeded to crush that tyrant, who had so mercilessly illtreated the Persian prince. So we see that "A friend in need is a friend indeed." "Make a new friend of an old friend, for an old friend is like old wine, which the older it becomes, the more it improves in quality and in healing power."—Pand Námeh e Ádarbád Máráspand.

\*

\*

\*

"Hold ready, O Mazdayasnian Zoroastrians, your hands, feet and *intelligence* for performing right deeds and at the right time," is a maxim from the Vendidad law-code.

Gushtásp, a Persian, had once some disagreement with his father and so preferred to wander here and there in search of employment. He applied somewhere for the post of a scribe but was refused. To a blacksmith he went next, but with his mighty strength, Gushtásp broke the poor smith's anvil, and so was turned out also from there. Then he went to a farmer who out of mercy offered him some food. For a long time he remained in exile; but while thus in strange lands, he always helped other people and did much good to them. With hard work he was able to do many wonderful deeds. He gathered a large circle of friends by and by. At length Gushtásp's father, who was always feeling much for his own prodigal son, was told of his son's sad plight and so he recalled the boy home. Ultimately by the will of God the diadem of Persia fell into the industrious hands of Gushtásp.

"God helps those who help themselves," is an English proverb and indeed he was able to secure divine aid, while away from home. Again, the heart of Gushtásp's father never failed to move when he was informed about the sad condition of his son.

\*

\*

\*

We have all heard of the gigantic palace and audience halls of Chosroes. All foreign travellers are amazed at the huge structures that seem to rule the deserts in Mesopotamia. These relics of Persian architecture are mere instances of the glories of our Sássánian monarchs.

For a worthy sovereign a worthy dwelling is always provided.

The buildings were just over, and Chosroe visited his new mansion. Great was his joy, as he saw those grand pillars and marvellous paintings on the walls.

Then he sent for his courtiers, "Have you ever," he asked, "seen so fine a palace as this?" There was an unanimous verdict: "O mighty monarch, there is no end to your glory."

Turning to one of the visitors, the monarch inquired whether there was any defect left therein. The keenest investigations were made, but the structure seemed quite perfect. At length some one gave out: "Your Imperial Majesty, there is a small cottage up there in the corner, whence some smoke issues over the chimney and blackens the precious plaster of the palace. It is greatly desirable that it should be removed from here."

Now there was a long history of that cottage. It belonged to an old woman aged 70, who would not part with her dwelling place on any account. She had made a protest: "O king of kings, thou art the master of a vast empire, and wilt thou not allow me to rule over my small hut where I was born and where I wish to die?" The kind monarch thereupon would not touch the cottage; his heart was full of sympathy for the old creature. He, however, had tried and persuaded her not to produce any smoke: "Do not kindle your fire; I shall ask my people to supply you with a part of my own meals every day." The monarch got a ready reply: "Thy glory is great. I have up to now lived on my own food and could not take unlawful food from any one." "For this reason," the monarch said to the courtiers, "there is this smoke still there and I have not deprived the woman of her rights."

Freedom in the right sense of the word is a key to civilisation.

\*

\*

\*



One day a cow belonging to this same old woman inadvertently spoiled a carpet, which was kept in the compound of the palace. A notice was sent round by the ministers of the royal house that she had violated the Monarch's reputation and showed him disrespect thereby. The woman retorted: "I must make it clear that Nosherván the Just has empowered me to pass through this compound which was and must be mine still. The king is just and knows well how to treat an old female subject like me. On the contrary it is you, who surround the throne, that spoil his good name." The men were silenced and the old woman had still her own way. The Vendidad says: "O holy Zarathushtra, clear our conscience. He who purifies his conscience with good thoughts, good words and good deeds has the clearness of conscience."

\*

\*

\*

The epic of the Sháh Námeḥ centres round the Hercules of Irán, Rustum. It is thus recorded that Sám had a son called Zál, who in spite of being exposed to wild beasts on the Elburz Mountain was miraculously saved, for he was destined to "to do heroic deeds in Persia." When Rudabah, the wife of Zál, gave birth to a child, the astrologers foretold that he was to be a wonderful hero; and indeed Rustum's name is a household word with us in that respect. It is reported that even at the age of six, he was "a full grown warrior"! Every now and then the Persians hailed him as the "Champion of the World."

Many are the heroic tales told about this "deified mortal." Once while trying to recover his famous horse Ruksh, which was lost somewhere in the jungles while hunting, he went to Saman-gam, where the king kept him as a royal guest. He showed him the utmost hospitality and besides gave to him his daughter Tahmináh in marriage. Before Tahmináh gave birth to a child, Rustum however was called away on urgent duties. Before

leaving he gave a charm to his wife, to be tied on to the body of the child, so that he might one day recognize his own issue.

Sohráb the son grew up in the most healthy circumstances. The child of a hero should be a hero too. Once the Tartar leaders under Afrásiáb desired to invade Persia. Sohráb was at that time serving under the old Commander, Piran-Wisa the Tartár.

Then commenced that thrilling episode of "Sohráb and Rustom," which Matthew Arnold has so brilliantly depicted in verse form.

The two armies met near the Oxus stream. In those days often a duel between the best heroes on either side decided the result of a battle. Sohráb's anxious mind desired a duel with the best Persian hero. He had heard of Rustum, but Rustum had never dreamt of his son. Father and son by heaven's decree were doomed to meet hand to hand. Ferood and Gudurz were told by Piran-Wisa to choose a champion from their camp to fight the Tartar Champion Sohráb. Now Rustum had long before retired from active service on account of his old age. But the Persians were placed in an awkward situation. "Help us, Rustum," they all said, "or we must fail." On being promised that he would be allowed to fight unknown by name, Rustum armed. There was joy on the Persian side. Sohráb looked a babe beside the giant figure of Rustum. He was twice warned. But the fight had ultimately to be started. At first Rustum had a fall on the sands, but a second time Sohráb saw himself helpless on the ground and Rustum above him. On being told by Sohráb about his fall to be avenged by his father Rustum, Rustum grew pale and argued that he had never had a son. Then commenced that most pathetic sight of the father meeting the wounded son in truce. It was too late. The charm was shewn to Rustum and Sohráb asked the victorious hero

to forbear and muttered: "But it was writ in Heaven that this should be." With pathetic words Sohráb dictated an epitaph: "Sohráb the mighty son of Rustum lies here; him his great father did in ignorance kill." The sight where Rustum sat by the river-side with his dead son in his arms is the most touching:—

"As those black granite pillars, once high-reared  
By Jemshid in Persepolis, to bear  
His house, now, mid their broken flights of steps  
Lie prone, enormous, down the mountain side  
So in the sand lay Rustum by his son."

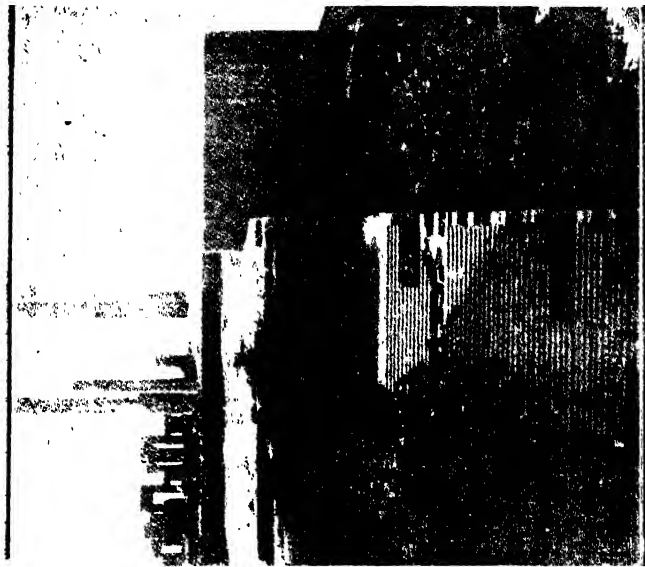
\*

\*

\*

J. R. Lowell in a beautiful poem gives a very interesting story of *Dara*, the simple shepherd. The Persian empire was slowly declining and to restore it to its former glory the Great King sent for men on every side to serve as honest Satraps. At that time there was a shepherd named Dara, who was said to have kept "his fleecy subjects" very well. To him therefore the Persian Monarch gave a satrapy of a large province. As he was a good shepherd, so he endeavoured to remain a good satrap. Now some envious persons went to the king and poisoned his ears, that Dara was embezzling large sums of state money. As a proof they said that wherever Dara went, he took with him a camel and on the camel a very heavy chest. Nobody knew what was inside the box. Such was the secret. The King at once started for Dara's province to make keen enquiries personally. As was his wont, Dara met the Monarch at the gate of the City. To his great surprise the master saw the treasure-chest on a camel close by. "Open this box for me," said he Dara did. But lo! instead of jewels, there was found inside only a shepherd's torn coat! All looked down in shame and the King, greatly perplexed, asked: "Pray, what is the meaning of this?" Dara explained that it was a coat to remind him always





**Ruins of Persepolis: Palace of Darius the Great, showing the grand Staircase and Platform, and the Hall of the Hundred Columns**

of his former poor condition, that he remained faithful and true to the last and still kept up the sceptre of simplicity. It was therefore that he became so successful. The King greatly admired the good qualities of Dara and gave him two more satrapies to govern.

\*

\*

\*

Here we have a talk about the ups and downs in the great story of Persia. True Persian history begins with the reign of Cyrus the Great, who was said to have founded the Persian Empire in 558 B.C. The title of Great was given without distinction to every one of this dynasty of Persian Emperors, and that shows that they lorded over a vast empire "greater than had ever yet been seen upon the face of the earth."

But its greatest extent after continual conquests was reached in the happy regime of Darius I, who was the master of not less than fifty-six provinces or satrapies. Great was the splendour of his court at the City of Susá and also at the summer residence of Ecbatána (Hamadán). Many subject nations brought to the Capital tribute in kind as well as in gold. Fortunately there are, still to-day on hill tops of Bahistun and Kermán, inscriptions that bear testimony to their power: "I am Darius, the Great King, the king of kings, the king of these many countries," are the opening words inscribed on one of these rocks.

But every thing in this world has its rise and its fall, and history repeats itself in many ways. The vast Persian Empire of Cyrus and Darius slowly began to decline, for, like Goldsmith's Sweet Auburn,

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,  
Where wealth accumulates and men decay."

The chief reason was that the whole was too unwieldy a concern to be controlled by one Head, and so each satrap tried to become independent of the central power or with the aid of mercenary troops rebelled against the neighbouring provinces and against the Persian lord.

Although the organisation of various satrapies was reduced to a science, seeds of dissatisfaction and mutual destruction were soon sown. Egypt first started the game in the time of Artaxerxes Longimanus (also called Behman). Greece and Sparta next took the field and emerged independent in the reign of Darius Nothus.

But the Greek influence still continued in many adjoining districts, till the climax was reached in the reign of Darius II. Darius had two sons, Artaxerxes the heir-apparent and Cyrus who was "born in the purple." Parysatis his Queen loved young Cyrus more and tried to influence the King to name him as the successor. Cyrus was said to have been "a man just after the Persian heart," a fine warrior and man whom people loved and liked. But somehow or other the Persian "tiara" passed on to Artaxerxes Niman.

Cyrus therefore resolved upon gaining the throne by conquest.

The tale is too long in the telling how Cyrus hired the mercenaries from Hellas and prepared for a great fight against his own brother. It is graphically narrated by Xenophon the Greek historian, himself a soldier in the Retreat of the Ten Thousand.

"Purity is the best for man from his very birth," observes the Avesta. Though Cyrus desired to take his brother by surprise and become a lord invulnerable, the righteous alone was to survive.

Early in the year 401 B.C. the march of Cyrus with an immense train of followers, including the 10,000 Greeks, commenced. "Try to imagine the dense suffocating clouds of dust that must have been raised by the progress of such an army," for the complete length of the procession was about six miles! From Sardis to Tarsus, thence to Myriandus, then across the river Euphrates and along the deserts the rebels marched, until they gave a final battle at Cunaxa. But with what disastrous results! The mercenaries as well as the regulars were completely routed by the barbarians, as they were styled. After all, the throne remained in the hands of the rightful heir, Artaxerxes. The 10,000 men had to *retreat* along another line of route till they reached Trebizond on the Black Sea. Sad to say, Cyrus lay dead on the battlefield.

But the Empire once shattered could not be easily reorganised even by wise Darius III, who endeavoured hard to do so. The neighbouring princes hovered like vultures over the country of Irán till the finishing stroke was given by the Macedonian Prince Alexander, who snatched the royal tiara from the last of the Achoemenian Emperors after successive victories at Granichus, Issus and Arbella. His plunders and his ravages, his spoils and destructions completed the chapter, the final meeting,—the Greek invader and the Persian Monarch,—being most pathetic.

\*

\*

\*

There are some instructive Persian episodes given by Aristo in the garb of English verse. In one of them he says that one day a rich pilgrim approached Zoroaster. All knew about the riches and grandeur of the said pilgrim. Still he came in an humble guise and sitting at the feet of the Great Master uttered: "O great Sage, I desire to ask you a question which has puzzled my mind these days. What should be the duty of a



wealthy man to those who by their luck are born in poor circumstances?"

After a moment's pause the Prophet replied: "You have come from afar seeking useful knowledge at my door. It is wisdom that has brought you here to-day. Those fortunate few who command wealth in this world should have two chief guides, viz., kindness and justice to one and all. Never should they swerve from the just path. It should be their duty to do good to all living souls, to look around for those who suffer, because distress is not far to seek. The 'honest poor' ought always to be remembered and orphans and widows to be given a helping hand. The doing of good to others bestows upon one, here in this world, a new birth."

The Pilgrim passed along his way with this treasure of rich reward and perfectly satisfied in his mind.

\*

\*

\*

One early morning it was announced to Zoroaster that a princess with a veil on her fair face was coming to him in her gilded palkee. In the hands of one of her maid servants there was a flag on which was embroidered in rich colours the name Lhumie Lhuv. She dwelt in the regions of bulbul and of dove. In fact she was from a fairy land. Her harpers played soft and slow, sweet and sacred music, while the veiled Princess accompanied by her maidens drew near the philosopher's cave. Thus she addressed the seer: "I come, O great Prophet, to inquire from thee as to who will be valued most in the creations last end."

"First of all," quoth the Prophet, "*those* who have done the most constant good to all living creatures, and *also* those who although powerless while living would have done good if they *could*."

The Princess thereupon lifted up her silk veil, and lo! to all eyes she seemed a *goddess*. The next instant she gave orders for parting; and waving her small flag in a last adieu to the philosopher, she marched off, till hills and valleys resounding for a time with the harpers' lay, the strain slowly died away, leaving sweet nature smiling upon the sage behind.



BOOK 9

GREAT THOUGHTS



# Great Thoughts

---

**T**HE hymns of the Zend-Avesta glow and burn with the assurance of the mystic and essential life of the soul, with the spiritual essence of all pure thought. The pure heavens are like light; thought is likened to a drop of pure light, and the departing soul has a sunbeam for its guide to conduct it to immortal light.—*Anna Hariette Leonowens.*

\* \* \*

Zoroaster has milk for babes and stronger meat for those whose growth demands it.

\* \* \*

Zoroaster cried out for Righteousness and yearned to see in nature symbols of the highest Truth.—*Dr. W. Boyd Carpenter.*

\* \* \*

It is a significant fact that though more than thirty centuries have rolled over the age of Zoroaster, and though a hundred nations have had their rise and fall since then, his religion stands, almost in its pristine simplicity, a monument to the lofty genius of its Founder.

\* \* \*

Whenever my mind attempts to peep "into the fathomless past," the spirit of the Prophet, poet and philosopher of Persia strikes it with speechless awe.—*B. Malabari.*

\* \* \*

In my opinion, it is very difficult to improve on the tenets of this religion as repeated by every lad, when he is old enough

to don the mystic girdle, and, instructed by his elders, says  
*Humata, Hukhta, Hvarshata.*—*M. Sykes.*

\* \* \*

Remember this much that cattle and horses, gold and silver  
and man's body are all frail. That man is not mixed with earth  
(does not decay) who is the praiser of Righteousness and who  
does his duties thoroughly and in a good manner.

—*Ardáviráf Námeš* (Firdousi).

\* \* \*

Gone the great sun-temple where  
Golden stair rose over stair;  
Gone the gilded galleries,  
Porticoes and palaces;  
And the plaintive nightwinds plead  
For the memory of the Mede,  
Sob for alien ears to heed,  
Pilgrim train and caravan,  
Round the walls of Hamadan.

—*Clinton Scollard.*

\* \* \*

I think one important reason why they (the Parsis) occupy  
so large a space in the mind of the world is that influence of  
their religion which imposed upon them love of God, love of  
truth, of charity in all its senses, and an earnest striving after  
doing some good as the mission of life, and which embraced  
their morality of life in pure thought, word and deed.

May they always continue to follow in these paths!

—*Dadabhai Naoroji.*

\* \* \*

In the advancement of business and justice, devotedness is good. In the progress of business energy is good. In keeping back destruction and misfortune from one's self employment is good.—*Mino-i Kherad* (West).

\* \* \*

The Zoroastrian religion has the extreme merit of standing upon three shining supports, that a child can see and comprehend—Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds—the spirit of which trilogy guides the law of Mazdayasnism.

—*Gerson da Cunha.*

\* \* \*

The region of the light is the place of Auharmazd, which they call “endless light,” and the omniscience and goodness of the unrivalled Auharmazd is what they call “revelation.”

—*Bundahishn.*

\* \* \*

The spirit of moderation is useful like a javelin.

The pleasure which is higher than any other pleasure is the pleasure of having fearlessness and good reputation.

—*Mino-i Kherad.*

\* \* \*

All good thoughts, good words, and good deeds are the outcome of wisdom.—*Khordeh Avesta.*

\* \* \*

To live in fear and falsehood is worse than death.

—*Mino-i Kherad.*

\* \* \*



O Thou Wise Lord, who when Thy world was young  
 Didst pierce the grim night of the eastern sky  
 With gladsome rays of truth and purity,  
 Forgive the error of this venturous song,  
 That strives to hymn Thy bounty. May my tongue  
 Tell of Thy Seer, and how against the Lie  
 Pure thoughts, pure words, pure actions' victory  
 Rang from his herald trumpet loud and long :—  
 So from the blaze wherein Thy glories dwell  
 Once more athwart the sunless gloom a Star  
 Shall flash its guiding message, and from far  
 The Sage of Iran answer to the spell,  
 And speed with trophies of a faith long dim  
 To find his Lord and bow the knee to Him.

—*J. Hope Moulton.*

\* \* \*

The fact that the Parsees are the only Eastern people who entirely abstain from smoking is very significant.—*Max Muller.*

\* \* \*

If men come here, as co-religionists or brethren or friends, to seek knowledge, let those who seek knowledge be given that knowledge with holy words.—*Vendidad.*

\* \* \*

I pray that our King may be victorious, through his good thoughts, good words and good actions! May he smite all the enemies, all the evil-doers! May he be gifted with all these boons in return for his good life! May that bring all glory to him and may all that enhance the piety of his soul!

—*Afringán (J. Mody).*

\* \* \*

Their (Parsees') morality, which is unquestionably pure, is intimately connected with the doctrines of their religion; and the foundation of their morality is the virtue of brotherly love.

—*Masonic Record of W. India.*

\* \* \*

Persian theosophy is aspirational and intellectual striving. Each and every Initiate is a soldier of Light fighting for Good.

—*Countess Marie.*

\* \* \*

Throughout this precious collection (the Gathas) the grand figure stands out most real, most human, appealing to the noblest, tenderest human sympathies, and making you feel that Zarathushtra has not been an empty name.—*Zenāide a Ragozin.*

\* \* \*

Whom *hast* Thou thus, O Zarathushtra, righteous?  
Who seeks distinction in our holy toils?  
'Tis he, our chief, heroic Vishtásp Kava;  
Whom in the same abode Thou, Lord, shall gather;  
These in the words of Good Mind I invoke!

—*Gáthás (Mills).*

\* \* \*

Ahura Mazda is the Ruler and King of the invisible, as well as of the visible world. It is He Himself Who has revealed His holy religion to Zarathushtra. In His being Ahura Mazda is a spirit. His attributes are therefore spiritual ones. He is the Wise, the Omniscient the Holy or Pure, the Benign.—*Geiger (D. Dastur).*

\* \* \*

To every act of devotion purity of heart is necessary; and to purity of heart Zoroaster supposes purity of body greatly contributes.—*Butler.*

\* \* \*

Fire, though belonging to the elements, seems to have had also a spiritual and celestial origin.—*Casartelli* (F. Dastur).

\* \* \*

Within the husk of your modern religion, there is the shining soul of the old Faith that came to Zardusht and once illuminated the whole trans-Himalayan world. Your religion is in agreement with the most recent discoveries of modern science, and that the freshest graduates from Elphinstone College has no cause to blush for the "ignorance" of Zaratusht!

—*H. Olcott.*

\* \* \*

The Avesta never despairs of the future of humanity; it affirms the final victory of good over evil.—*M. Mitchell.*

\* \* \*

One of the most beautiful aspects of the System was that which carried morality into the ordinary pursuits of life. All the people were required to devote themselves in whole or in part to the work of tillage. Ahura Mazda expected it, Zoroaster taught it and Piety demanded it.—*Ridpath.*

\* \* \*

Wisdom is better than wealth of every kind. Wisdom, that has no goodness with it, is not to be considered as wisdom.

—*Mino-i Kherad* (West).

\* \* \*

Think not of other men's property, but try industriously to improve your own. Hold out a helping hand to the needy and poor.—*Ashirvād.*

\* \* \*

Thou art exalted, O our Lord! Thou art necessarily existent, and there is nought self-existent but Thee. Thy goodness is most expansive, Thy generosity most cheering.

—*Desâtir* (Mulla Firoze).

\* \* \*

Purity is for man, next to life, the greatest good.

—*Vendidâd* (Darmesteter).

\* \* \*

Poverty which is through honesty is better than wealth which is from the treasure of others.—*Mino-i Kherad*.

\* \* \*

The will of the Lord is the law of holiness.—*Haptan Yasht*.

\* \* \*

The three greatest concerns of men are (1) to make of him who is an enemy a friend, (2) to make him who is evil righteous, and (3) to make him who is ignorant educated.

—*Shâyast lá Shâyast*.

\* \* \*

"My light," said God to Zoroaster, "is under all that shines."—*A. Mownsey*.

\* \* \*

The character at once martial and religious which appears with such heroic traits in most of the Yashts, could not have been without influence on the masculine discipline under which, if we may believe classic antiquity, the monarchy established by Cyrus rose to grandeur.—*Burnouf*.

\* \* \*

If Persia could have won the battles of Marathon and Salamis, the worship of Ormuzd might have become the religion of the whole civilised world.—*Elizabeth Reed.*

\* \* \*

Messiah-like he (Zoroaster) appears, and the land of Irán rings with his clarion note of reform. He is born out as one out of the fulness of time.—*Jackson.*

\* \* \*

Everything in the Zoroastrian system hinges on purity.

—*Dr. Adolf Rapp.*

\* \* \*

Should we indeed in a future world be permitted to hold high converse with the great departed, it may chance that in that "Bactrian sage" who lived and taught almost before the dawn of history, we may find the spiritual patriarch to whose lessons we have owed such a portion of our intellectual inheritance, that we might hardly conceive what human belief must be now had Zoroaster never lived.—*Francis P. Cobbe.*

\* \* \*

A detailed description of the resurrection and the last judgment is contained in the 31st Chapter of the Bundahish, which is, no doubt, founded on original Avesta sources which are now lost. In it an old song is embodied, the purport of which is to show that it appears to short-sighted mortals impossible for the body to be restored again, yet nothing is impossible for the hand of the Almighty, who created heaven and earth, endows the tree with sap, and gives life to embryos.—*Haug.*

\* \* \*

O Light! O light!  
 Thou hope-inspiring Light!  
 With thy glad smile  
 Of greeting once again,  
 A silent world  
 From mystic slumber wakes  
 To hail, with joy, thy glorious reign.

—*Aristo.*

\* \* \*

Do not say that they (Persians) were fire-worshippers.  
 They were worshippers of one God.—*Firdousi Tusi.*

\* \* \*

Gone is the golden sun,  
 Far in the West away;  
 And twilight sighs to earth  
 The last farewell of day.  
 On outspread, starry wings,  
 Swift in thy mystic flight,  
 Thou com'st to bless the world  
 O sweet, O silent night.

—*Aristo.*

\* \* \*

We see it clearly stated that the sun purifies the earth and waters, destroys the devas or microbes, withstands death and dispels disease.—*Max Muller.*

\* \* \*

Zoroaster is said to have preached, if not a new doctrine, yet a substantially new and pure form of the loftiest and noblest religious belief of Iran.—*F. Cook.*

\* \* \*

It can hardly be believed what living signification each act has, nor what tender and solemn thoughts rest around the poetic name of the Tower of Silence.—*Howard Vincent.*

\* \* \*

The Zoroastrian mode of disposing of the dead in the Tower of Silence is thoroughly wholesome and cleans away most effectually one of the greatest difficulties encumbering the path of the sanitary reformers in the great cities of the world.

—*J. Maclean.*

\* \* \*

Funeral obsequies, conducted in accordance with the teachings and precepts of Zoroaster, are entirely agreeable to the principles of a pure religion, and may be and are ingeniously and powerfully supported by physiological science and experience.

—*Lord Churchill.*

\* \* \*

A unique spirit more profound than that which meets us in all the rest of the Avesta, speaks in the Gathas. Almost every strophe contains a pregnant thought: "And I will worship Thee, praising Thee, O Mazda Ahura! together with Asha and Vahishtem Mano and Kshathravairya and the wished-for revealer of the well-disposed, ye who wait for the faithful on the way to Paradise."—*K. Geldner (Mackichan).*

\* \* \*

O Star sublime! O Messenger of Light!  
To that final goal lead us all aright!  
O Soul supreme! O Leader of the Light!  
Tho' here unseen, Thou shine *there* ever bright!

—*Ruby.*

\* \* \*

BOOK 10

FRAGMENTS OF  
RELIGIOUS VERSES





# Fragments of Religious Verses

*[Dedicated to those who desire to approach the subject in a lighter vein. It is hoped that they will judge the following lines by the spirit in which they have been composed and not otherwise.]*

## Our Prayer to-day :

Into the sacrificial flames to-day  
We Parsees pour the burning heart's contents,  
Upon the radiant Âtash raised on high  
We lay the sandal wood with love and pride—  
Pride for our glorious past and records rare,  
Love for our Leader here as well as there.  
O sons of Aryan land, now rise and see  
Twelve hundred years and eighty-four have fled,  
Since broken lay the sceptre of our kings  
That ruled o'er seven Keshwars far and wide,  
Since that Cadesia Day when fighting fell  
King Yezdezard the last of Sâssân House,  
And now we usher in another day  
And thus to Ahuramazd our Father pray :  
"O hallowed one, all bright and blissful Lord !  
Thou great preserver of the human race,  
Omnipotent, eternal, only One,  
With Thine auroral torch Thou light us up,  
Bring once again our ancient Kyânian days,  
Just raise us all above the platform high  
That saw on it the pious feet of those  
Heroic souls, both true and brave in heart,  
On N'hâvand's well-fought field of partial fame ;  
Just lift us, Lord, upon a supreme height,  
So that embracing Good and all that's Thine  
Away we turn from Angraman indign."

**Sweet Iran :**

Sweet Irán ! splendid relic of the past,  
Of time-old tales and acts all rightly cast,  
Where once the holiest of holy swayed  
O'er lovely hills and fields now all decayed !  
How oft I've paused throughout my daily run  
To think of all thy brilliant past undone !  
How oft I've thought of all thy fertile farms,  
Thy Aryan homes embraced in nature's arms,  
And healthy dwellings of hard-working swains  
For freedom, ease, for pious peace and gains !  
And oft whene'er mine eyes do calmly close  
In long-drawn dreams, in pure and sweet repose,  
I wander in those dreary lands of old  
To quench my thirst for tales to be retold.  
Dear land ! how long did all thy virtues last  
And sung in songs of thy heroic past !  
Many thy states, but where those states are now ?  
O where those subject nations' humble bow ?  
Antique place, parent of the Persian race,  
From Gayomard we thy long lineage trace.  
Now midst thy mould'ring halls of songs serene  
There's desolation all, where once 'twas green.  
Meseems no more that blazing fire burns  
Which from the blessed banks of Urumians  
To groves of Bokhárá and Samarkend  
Burnt in thy temples high above all land.  
No longer that diadem of Gushtásp  
Doth splendid shine, nay gone now from our grasp ;  
No more are " Ashem " and " Ahunavar " .  
Chanted in Mithraic aisles of Zoraster.  
Sunk are thy columns high in Chosroe's Hall  
There summer heat corrodes the white-wash'd wall.

And straining, 'scaping from the Moslems' ire  
Thy sons did roam, and breathed the foreign air.  
Wandering for long in those un-Aryan lands  
To save their Faith from that usurper's hands,  
For nights and days they kept their sacred fire  
In caves; still clad in spotless white attire  
Thy children lived; at length with farewell sailed  
Towards Hindi shores and there they welcome hailed.  
The weary ships at Sanján anchors cast  
And shelter now they sought from stormy blast.  
Alas, that ancient land of magis fell  
From heights of glories, who can justly tell?  
Yet Irán lives and struggling still shall live  
For her great grand descendants they outlive,  
Who would not care to be the tyrants' slaves  
So long as heav'n has heights and sea has waves.  
Beyond the Ormuzd Isle and ocean caves,  
Beyond the wide Arabian stormy waves,  
Beyond the rugged chains of mountains blown,  
The poor exiles are quite uncared-for thrown;  
For they would rather turn to distant strands  
Than be enslaved to frantic despots' wands.  
In Gujrát's groves, in shades of taller trees  
The Parsees chant their hymns, yea live in peace.

**'Tis this we Parsees need to-night :**

Shut up as if by five fixed doors  
Our mortal body seems to be  
A box with five sense openings  
On earth, O Lord, bestowed by Thee.  
Almighty Mazd, Thou'rt free throughout  
This wide and varied Universe;  
Thy will is done in what we work  
Or say or do and things diverse.

Men are just Thy minutest parts,  
So they themselves can render free  
Like caged birds thro' the five sense valves  
And soaring be at one with Thee.

Fire and light, both Ahura's eyes—  
Issues from deep red lips of skies—  
We praise them in all hours of need  
To strengthen all the friendly ties.

How sweet the fragrance of the fire !  
How ultra-white the radiant light  
That emanates from sandal wood—  
'Tis this we Parsees need to-night.

The temple-flames, with incense fed,  
Are meant the soul-disease to cure,  
To light our inmost mind and heart  
And drive the dust of deeds impure :

Flames that can ope the senses wide  
And lead the spirit divine therewith ;  
By fire and fire alone, O Lord,  
We grow Thy pious kin and kith.

Light is Mithra's essence AI  
His Law of Faith and Hope and Love,  
Aye, do away with chaos *here*,  
Just seek the se'en-staged Heaven above.

### Light Divine:

Light, O light,  
Thou pierce deep,  
Our inmost minds thou purge and keep  
Purge the dirt of deeds unfair,  
Keep if there be things to spare.

I find light in the virgin eye-lids of the dawn,  
I find it in the blush of crescent moon ;  
I find light in the modesty of early morn,  
I find it in the dash and dart of noon.  
I find light in the rosy tinge of May,  
I find it in the mature hues of passing day.  
I find light in the golden rainbow's tide,  
I find it in the fringe of shaded clouds beside.

Light leaps and gambols in the Golden Star,  
'Tis there in guileless children's lovely smile ;  
Light is the caution lamp of Heaven's car,  
For e'er it breathes incense in Mithra's aisle.

### The Parsee Pilgrim Fathers at Sanjan—(about 715 A.D.)

Soft and slow, soft and slow the deep sea sings  
By lonely Sanján's sand-wash'd shores of old,  
By the majestic palms that seem to rule  
The place where Parsee Pilgrim Fathers first  
Set foot and Jádi Rána's mercy sought.  
There where once fertile fields of corn grew full  
Where scions of the great Iránian race  
Kindled in caves again their sacred flames,  
The sun has paled and left the landscape dull ;  
The hollow woods have yet unceasing mourned  
The loss of Ardasheer, that gallant band  
Of stalwart males all quick at Rana's call,  
When Mahmood Begdá sent his cruel race  
Once more to chase the oft-chased Zorastrian lot.  
From place to place thê sacred fire still  
Alive and still aglow they took ; at last  
With piety at Udvádá installed.

Now here the lights have faded far, and here  
The sacred songs are sadly turned to sighs.  
All souls have fled from Sanjān shores, and all  
Its ancient palace stones and bricks are hid,  
The roaring sea alone remains to mark  
The spot—and lo! it points t' ETERNITY.



